

# Communion

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 17 April 2011

Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[ 0 : 00 ] Well, this morning, first we'll be taking a look in the Old Testament, and this prophecy was written about 500 B.C.

So, please turn to the book of Zechariah, chapter 9. If you can't find Zechariah, just go to the last book in the Old Testament, which is Malachi.

And it's right before that. Right. It does start with a Z. It's sort of toward the end of the alphabet, so that means it's toward the end of the Old Testament.

But we're there in Zechariah, chapter 9, verse 9.

Again, written about 500 B.C. Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem!

[ 1 : 13 ] Behold, your king is coming to you. He is just and endowed with salvation, humble and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Then, please turn to Matthew, chapter 21. And this occurred approximately 32 A.D.

And this is when that prophecy was fulfilled. And we'll be looking at Matthew, chapter 21, verses 1 through 9.

When they had approached Jerusalem and had come to Bethage at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied there, and a colt with her.

Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, The Lord has need of them, and immediately he will send them.

[ 3 : 05 ] This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet. Say to the daughter of Zion, Behold, your king is coming to you, gentle and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.

The disciples went, and did just as Jesus had instructed them, and brought the donkey and the colt, and laid their coats on them.

And he sat on the coats. Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road.

The crowds going ahead of him, and those who followed were shouting, Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

Hosanna in the highest! I was just thinking as the ladies' trio singing that beautiful song, Worthy, describing worthiness to the Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 4 : 34 ] And he is worthy only if what we have just been reading about him in Zechariah and in Matthew is true.

Because if they aren't true, he is not worthy. This amazing prophecy, uttered 500 years before the birth of Christ, is just one of many such prophecies, strewn all throughout the Old Testament, that find their detailed fulfillment in the person of Jesus Christ.

And what this all boils down to, this whole subject of religion, Christianity, whatever, however you want to call it, what it all boils down to is the identity of this person.

You know, that was the only really critical and controversial issue when Christ came the first time. All of Jerusalem was abuzz, and the singular question was this.

Who is Jesus of Nazareth? Is he the one promised by Moses and the prophets? Is he the one that they say should come?

[ 6 : 04 ] Or, do we look for another? And out of all of the prophecies given in regard to the person of Christ and some aspect of his personhood and his ministry, and I suspect that there are upwards of 50 of them, they ought to provide for any reasonable person ironclad evidence that there is no possible explanation for him being anyone other than who the scriptures say that he is.

If you are to look at the mathematical probability of this, and this is something that Dr. Peter Stoner did as a mathematician, but he didn't take 50 of the prophecies that were spoken regarding the Christ, he only took eight.

Eight of the more prominent and obvious ones. And he computed the mathematical probability of anyone being able to fulfill just eight of the prophecies that Christ fulfilled, and being able to attribute it to anything like a coincidence.

The number that he came up with, the mathematical probability, was one in ten to the seventeenth power. You just take the number ten and you add seventeen zeros to it.

And you get a number that not even Congress can pronounce. For years and years during my lifetime, Congress has talked in terms of billions.

[ 7 : 50 ] But it wasn't until this housing bust and the financial crisis that hit several months ago that we find Congress start talking in terms of trillions and of our national debt being in the trillions.

But if you look carefully at the number of ten to the seventeenth power, you're talking quadrillion.

Now, a million is a thousand thousands. And a billion is a thousand millions.

By the way, there's a huge difference between a billionaire and a millionaire. Millionaires are a dime a dozen. Well, maybe not a dime a dozen. But you know what I mean.

Comparatively speaking, trillionaires, a trillion is such that there isn't anyone in the world, no, not Bill Gates and all the rest of them put together that can talk in terms of a trillion.

[ 8 : 55 ] But the number that Dr. Stoner came up with was just eight. The likelihood of Jesus Christ being able to fulfill eight of the 50 plus prophecies that were given regarding him, the odds of it being coincidental would be one in ten to the 17th power.

Now, that ought to be fairly convincing to anybody with an open mind. The problem is, some minds are not open.

Take Peter or Richard Dawkins, for instance, who has written a best-selling book proposing his atheistic views, which contains really nothing new, but is simply old arguments cleverly rehashed.

Rather than to entertain what Genesis says in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. No, no, no, no, no, that can't be.

That's impossible. I remember viewing the movie, I'm sure some of you saw it, Expelled. It was Ben Stein doing some utterly embarrassing interviews to academia.

[ 10 : 18 ] And by the way, if you haven't seen that, you ought to. It is the most embarrassing expose that the academic intelligentsia have ever been guilty of.

The hypocrisy is just oozing out of that thing as you watch it. And rather than even entertain the possibility of direct creation because God spoke and it was done, he of course opts for the evolutionary process of the primeval ooze, the slime that slithered up on the bank zillions of years ago or as they say from goo to you in a few billion years rather than and when asked do you think that there is any possibility that is there any possibility at all that evolution could be wrong?

Well yes, I suppose there is that possibility. I don't think that it's wrong but I suppose there is. Well what would you suggest as an alternate? Now this is an intelligent man.

Do you know what his alternate was? Well, there is always the possibility of aliens from outer space coming to earth and seeding the earth so that we have biological life and plant life and all the rest of this?

And he said, you mean aliens from outer space traveled to earth and planted seeds here that populated and became humanity and everything? Well, that's a possibility.

[ 12 : 08 ] That's a possibility. Genesis 1 No, no, that's not possible. That can't be. Isn't that incredible? But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, whose minds the God of this age hath blinded, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

It's incredible. There are people who just look at the evidence and say, I'm not convinced. And sometimes you wonder, what would it take to convince them?

Well, God would have to show himself in a more obvious fashion than he has. And you know the time is coming when he will do just that. But in the meanwhile, God has established something that is called the principle of faith.

And that doesn't mean that he asks us to believe anything without sufficient evidence. He has not given all the evidence he could, but he has given adequate evidence.

So much so that Romans chapter 1 says that man who does not believe is without excuse because the evidence has been sufficient.

[ 13 : 36 ] The time is coming when we will not have to believe on the basis of the evidence that we have, but faith will be turned into reality, and hope will be turned into reality.

Consequently, both hope and faith will go out of style. They will no longer be needed. That's what the writer of 1 Corinthians was talking about when he said, there abides these three, faith, hope, and love.

The greatest of these is love. And one reason that love is the greatest is because it's never going to go out style, but faith and hope will.

We walk by faith, not by sight. This is the dispensation of the grace of God, and God is calling men and women to faith in himself on the basis of the evidence that he has revealed regarding his son and his creation.

And we are told in the scriptures that the evidence is more than compelling. so. But, you know, there are people who want to believe, and for them, the evidence is very compelling.

[ 14 : 55 ] And there are people who do not want to believe, and for them, the evidence is viewed as inadequate. So a whole lot begins with the presupposition and the mindset of the individual to whom the evidence is presented, because everybody has the same evidence to evaluate.

But we come to that evidence with a different grid, or a different agenda. The best way, and the most honest way, to come to view any evidence, and I would be the first to admit we're not always able to do this, but the best way to come to any evidence, to examine it, is from an unbiased, unprejudiced point of view.

You approach the evidence from a position of neutrality, and you're saying, I don't know which way this thing is going to go.

I will have to view the evidence. This theoretically is what a juror is supposed to do when they are selected for jury duty, and assigned a particular case.

their responsibility is to hear the evidence, and here is somebody who is on trial for a crime that he has committed. If you are a responsible juror, you will not look at the man who is accused and say, he sure looks guilty to me.

[ 16 : 29 ] His eyes are set too close. Or, he's such a nice looking person, and I don't believe he would be capable of committing a crime like that.

Both of those positions are terribly inadequate and terribly wrong. You are supposed to say, I really don't know whether this man is guilty or not.

I'll have to hear the evidence. I'll have to see the exhibits. I'll have to hear the arguments of the prosecution, and then hear the arguments of the defense, and then I will weigh all of that data, and try to reach the conclusion.

That's the most honest way to approach any kind of subject. But, if you come to it, not wanting to believe, because you are aware that if you do go this way, it is going to require certain things from you that you don't want to provide.

Therefore, I don't believe that. There's no truth in that. And we excuse ourselves from it. That's looking at it with a biased mind. And then some people are just super gullible.

[ 17 : 51 ] They want to believe everything. And they're into everything. Every new thing that comes down the pike, they're ready to jump on board. And that too can be just as disastrous. So, the name of the game, as much as lieth within us, is to be open and objective and discriminating and evaluating and try to get all of the evidence before we make a decision.

And that's the way you ought to approach the person of Jesus Christ. Because let me tell you something. Truth has nothing to fear.

and if you are pursuing the truth, you don't need to be concerned about where it will lead you. Because truth will never lead you astray.

Truth will only lead you down a path that opens to more truth. And as long as we are walking in the truth, there will be more truth available to us.

It's difficult. I admit it. It's difficult to formulate an unbiased mind because we tend to all have our likes and dislikes, our prejudices, our biases.

[ 19 : 08 ] Our background tends to create them for us, the things that we are experienced to, experienced, and it's sometimes difficult to keep what we call an open mind.

But it's so important. And when we come to the person of Jesus Christ, one thing is certain. He is either who he claimed to be or he isn't.

It's as simple as that. And I want to caution you about one thing. Jesus Christ is not the truth for Christians.

Don't add that. Jesus Christ is the truth. Period. In today's culture of multiculturalism and religious pluralism, they like to say, well, Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, the life for Christians, but not for anybody else.

He is for those who believe it. That is, the devil's lie. Either he is objectively or he is not objectively.

[ 20 : 39 ] You cannot have it any other way. Either he is who he claimed to be or he is the greatest liar, the greatest fraud, the greatest manipulator, the greatest con man who ever lived.

You cannot have it both ways. This is why. This is why Christians absolutely insist on the exclusivity of Jesus Christ for salvation.

Because if he is not the Savior of the world, if he is not everybody's Savior who puts their faith and trust in him, then he is not worthy to be anybody's Savior because he is presented as the Savior of the world.

And that's why we have to say unapologetically, there is no other way. This is the way that God has provided.

And he didn't ask our opinion on it. He didn't ask if we would prefer something else. He provided just one way. And he asks us to believe that on the basis of the evidence that he has given.

[ 21 : 47 ] And I am convinced that the evidence is very compelling, overwhelming. Well, today we're serving the Lord's table.

And I like the focus of our service to be on it and on the one who is behind it. So be reminded, if you will, the word reminded, spread across the front of the communion table there, is due in remembrance of me.

And he has ordained these physical elements to depict what took place when he gave himself for us.

And the bread that we are going to distribute and eat reminds us of his physical body. And the cup reminds us of the blood that he shed.

And we would remind you that this is a memorial service. This is not a liturgical service in the sense that it imparts some grace.

[ 23 : 07 ] This does not impart grace. This is not a sacrament. I know there are some bodies of believers and some Christian churches that regard this as a sacrament.

And that means that it contributes to your salvation or that it helps you on to God as it were. We do not see it this way. We believe that it is established for believers and we do not partake of this in order to become Christians or in order to help us become Christians.

We partake of these elements because we have become Christians and this is a physical simple way on a periodic time of reminding ourselves of the solemnity of that day and what really took place when he who knew no sin was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

So it is a high and holy privilege that is afforded us to be able to partake of these elements and we are admitting our unworthiness.

Our worthiness is linked to his work for us and we are in Christ and that's what gives us our worthiness. It's being in him because we partake of his righteousness rather than our own and it is his righteousness that makes us worthy.

[ 24 : 40 ] If you are here today and you are not a member of Grace Bible Church, we want to assure you that you are welcome to partake with us if you are a member of the body of Christ.

So if you have placed your faith and trust in Christ, then you are welcome to join us because this is not a church membership thing. This is a body of Christ responsibility.

So if you are a believer and have placed your faith and trust in him, you are invited to join with us whether you are a member here or not. Paul said that we are to examine ourselves.

That means we are to engage in some introspection. We are to ask ourselves if we know of anything in our life that is displeasing to the Lord.

Christians can do that, you know. We are not people who have arrived. We are people who know that we have not arrived. And it is entirely possible as a believer we may engage in things that are displeasing to the Lord.

[ 25 : 52 ] And if we do and if we are, we need to address that issue with him and we need to take whatever steps are necessary in order to be pleasing to the Lord.

There is a sense in which just being in Christ means you are pleasing to him because your faith is in him. But that is your position. That is unalterable.

But we all know that in our practice it can be something different. And we all have our flaws and our foibles. And if there is some impediment, spiritual impediment in our lives that needs to be addressed before we come to this table, then this is the time to do it.

So we invite you to join with us now for a moment of silent prayer. Thank you. Do you open your hymnals please?

Number 312. Calvary covers it all. Hymn number 312.

[ 27 : 12 ] I'll ask you to stand if you will please. far dearer than all that the world can impart was the message that came to my heart.

How that Jesus alone will come to for I send it atone and Calvary covers it all.

Calvary covers it all. My past with sin and stain by guilt and despair Jesus took on him there and found to be covered with all.

Be seated please. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 29 : 29 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Our Lord took a common loaf and broke off a piece and then passed it to those next to him and said take eat of this this is my body which is given for you.

It's a wonderful old hymn. Number 312 we'll sing the second stanza. The stripes that he bore the thorns that he wore the thorns that he wore he bore and the thorns that he bore told his mercy and love evermore.

[ 31 : 52 ] my heart fell in shame as I called on his name and Calvary covers it all now and I'll Uran  
■■■■qu revel along take to youuel and income and ■■■ Together and mine may come in  
grief and have a gefil wonder and ■■■ In the same manner, he took the cup.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 35 : 05 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[ 37 : 01 ] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[ 38 : 35 ] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. You can appreciate that as well.

So thank you for your gifts. And if you would like, and of course, it need not be just today in connection with this. Anyone at any time is welcome to make any contribution that they wish.

Just designate it, the Benevolent Fund. And we'll see to it that it is channeled to the right fund so that it can help someone. So it doesn't have to be today. It could be any time.

[ 40 : 23 ] And then you could just drop it in the offering box and that would be fine. So go right ahead, gentlemen. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 41 : 50 ] Amen. As you turn to your hymnal for the last time and the last hymn, our benediction will be verse 4.

We see the black drapery here. And the black, of course, speaks of death. And in connection with Palm Sunday, that's what was coming.

Our Lord came to Jerusalem for the express purpose of dying. And that's symbolized in the black drapery. But next Sunday's coming.

And that's all going to be changed. And we are so glad. Would you stand, please? Sing with me this last stanza. Calvary covers it all. How blessed the thought that my soul by him bought Shall be his in the glory on high Where with gladness and song I'll be one of the wrong And Calvary covers it all Calvary covers it all I passed with its sin and stain My guilt and despair

Jesus took on him there And Calvary covers it all We anticipate seeing you next Sunday morning for breakfast.

[ 44 : 11 ] We have a sumptuous resurrection celebration breakfast. The details are in the bulletin. Thanks to all of you who are contributing the delicious dishes to make it possible.

We have a grand occasion and the best thing in the world to celebrate. God bless you. You are dismissed. Thank you.