

“Mark 13: Jesus on the End Times - Part 2”

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[0 : 0 0] song, Jesus loves me, this I know, that's a kid's song, right? But it's, that's what it talks about right here in this Galatians 2.20. He loved me and gave himself up for me. Jesus does love each and every one of us and wants all men to come to him in repentance and to find salvation and eternal life in him. We have been going, and we can start the recording, Keith, we are, we've been going through the book of Mark here for over a year. In fact, I think it's been like a year and a half studying through the book of Mark. We are a good, I don't know, what, 80% maybe of the way through.

There's 16 chapters. We're going to be, we're in chapter 13, but this chapter is interesting because it, the whole chapter is a discourse that Jesus gives on the end time. What's going to happen in the future? We spent some time the last time talking about just prophecy in general, prophecy about the future, about what's going to happen, why God tells us about what's going to happen in the future. He's looking for, you know, there are different reasons. One is to give us a hope for the future, that we know comfort for the future. Life can be difficult at times, and we can look to the future with hope. It can give us comfort. But there are, like I said, different views on the end times, and we looked at some of those. I gave out a handout, and we looked at four different views.

When it comes to the passage that we're going to be looking at today, there are kind of two major categories. Some people say that the things that Jesus said was going to happen here actually already happened. They're in our past. They were in Jesus's future at the time, but where we're standing at today, there actually happened in the past. We're actually taking the view that, no, this is still future. And I think that, at least today, that's probably the majority view, is that these things are still future for us. But we're going to look a little bit today, and well, why is there that difference? Why do some people take one view and others the other? And we're going to look at some of the foundational ideas or assumptions, maybe, on why that's the case. But open up to Mark chapter 13. I think at some point this morning, we're actually going to read through probably not the whole chapter, but we'll read through most of it. So I'm just going to give a quick overview about kind of the approach that we're going to take to this passage and what it's saying, and then we're going to look at some of the details. Again, we're going to look at actually a lot of context, because this is something that Jesus said is going to happen in the future, but this is not the first time that somebody talked about what was going to happen in the future, and not the first time that somebody talked about these specific events. We're going to look in the Old Testament at what some of the Old Testament prophets had said.

This wasn't something new that Jesus was bringing up, even though he might have brought in some extra details. So this passage we're looking at, it describes something that the Bible calls in various places a time of tribulation, a seven-year period. We'll look at that more in a second, in which there will be tremendous upheaval in the whole earth, but specifically a persecution and suffering geared towards the Jewish people. And at the end of that seven-year period, Jesus will come back and he will return to establish a kingdom on the earth for a thousand years.

And then after that kingdom, and it doesn't talk about that in this passage, but after that kingdom will be what the Bible calls the, it will make everything new, there will be a whole new heaven and earth. It's called, some people call it the eternal state. So, but there are references in here that seem to indicate, and as we read through this, it seems to indicate that this is actually going to happen soon. And this is where some of the confusion, I think, comes in. But we're going to take the approach, well, this is something that's still going to happen in the future. So we're going to, we're going to look at why that is. Last week I talked about kind of two different theological systems, and without trying to get too much in the weeds, there's one theological system or framework called dispensationalism, and that's the approach that, that I take and that we've taken here at this church for, for many years. And then another system, some people call it covenant theology, and really it has to do with, is there a, really a continuity throughout the Bible with who God is dealing with and what his plans are, or is there really a, kind of some, a different plan? And we're actually going to, going to look at that, and that's what we're going to, the approach that we're going to take, or the position that we're going to take, is that there's actually, God has this plan for the Jewish people, and then there's us today. Because is anybody here Jewish? I'm not Jewish.

[5 : 24] There might be some people who have some Jewish ethnicity in them, but if you're not Jewish, then you are what the Bible calls a Gentile. And so, so we take the approach that there's actually a, a slightly different plan, not completely different, but for the Gentile people, and we'll talk about exactly what that means, because it's not exactly a difference between Jew and Gentile, but there's a plan for the Jewish people, and then both Jew and Gentile, but it's a, it's a different plan. So, if that's confusing, hopefully we'll, we'll clear that up here in a second.

But let's, even though we're in Mark chapter 13, and keep a finger in there, we're going to go back to the book of Daniel, and we're going to start there. Daniel is a book, Daniel was a prophet, and he actually had several angelic visitations in which he was given messages from the Lord.

Let's go to Daniel chapter 9, Daniel chapter 9 in your Bibles. Daniel was, and I'm, instead of reading the precursor to this, we're just going to read a, a few verses from here, but I'm going to give the setup. Daniel is praying to the Lord, and praying to the Lord about his nation Israel, who is, at the time, they are in captivity. They have been carried away from the land of Israel by captors, those who have conquered them, by their own conquerors, and they are living in a foreign land, and he is praying for his nation Israel. You see, God had made promises for, for many hundreds, even thousands of years, that they would, they would become a great people. And now they're living in a foreign land, and all these promises regarding their land and their kingdom, it's, there's confusion as to what's going to happen here. So, an angel, an angel comes and visits Daniel, and this is what he says. Verse 24, Daniel chapter 9, verse 24, 70 weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin. Notice how he mentions the holy city, that's Jerusalem. Daniel doesn't live in Jerusalem, he lives in Babylon at the time. Jerusalem, at this point, was destroyed. To make reconciliation for iniquity or sin, to bring in everlasting righteousness. That's something, again, that many of the prophets spoke of. There's coming a day in which righteousness will be established, not only in Jerusalem and Israel, but also in the whole world. To seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy. Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem, until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks. So, here's the message, that there's going to be a command to restore that destroyed city of Jerusalem. At this point in Daniel's life, Jerusalem sits in ruins. And this angel is saying that there's going to, there's a timeline, and it's going to start when there's a command given to restore that city. We actually can look further in the Bible and see when that actually happened. That actually happened, and I can't remember how much further in the future, but something to the effect of a hundred years later, one of the kings that was holding the people captive, the people of Israel captive, said, all right, I'm going to send you, some of you guys back, and I'll allow you to rebuild your city. And so, here's the timeline. From that time, when that command is given, until Messiah the Prince, so the Messiah is the coming one, the one who has been foretold that will restore the nation of Israel and make all things new. It will be seven weeks plus sixty-two weeks. Now, or sixty, yeah, sixty-two weeks. Now, that's funny. Why would you do that? And I'm actually not sure, but it requires us to do a little bit of math. Sixty-two plus seven is?

Okay, you guys are a little slow on that. But, you know, math sometimes is hard. Sixty-nine weeks. And it's like, well, sixty-nine weeks, that's not a very long time. Well, most people, you know, in Hebrew, the word week actually is just the number seven. That's it. If you want to talk about a week, you actually say seven. And so, if something happened three weeks ago, you say, well, that happened three sevens ago in Hebrew, literally. And so, a week just means seven, and it can mean seven days, but in this case, what it means is seven years. So, there will be sixty-nine times seven years.

And, well, again, more math. What is that? Well, it's actually four hundred. I'm doing this on the fly. So, be impressed, please. Four hundred and eighty-three. Who's checking my math? Am I doing okay?

[10:43] Four hundred and eighty-three years. And so, four hundred and eighty-three years. Now, people have looked into this prophecy. In fact, there's a guy named Sir Robert Anderson. He was actually, he lived right around the turn of the century, early 1900s. He was, he lived in England, and his job was, he was a detective, actually high up, in Scotland Yard. And he helped investigate crimes. In fact, he was involved, if you've ever heard of Jack the Ripper. Has anybody heard of the famous Jack the Ripper? You know, I don't want to go into any details, but he was a big-time criminal back then, who eluded Scotland Yard for quite a while. But he was actually involved in that case. He was a Christian. He became a Christian. He became intensely interested in especially end-time things about the future.

Not just that, but other things. But he wrote a book. I'm trying to remember the name of it. The Prince? Is that the name of it? Or? The Coming Prince. Thank you. The Coming Prince. And it was about, he focused in on this. And he did some math and some calendar work and figured out, and, you know, when it comes to dates, dates are hard. And so people have a little bit of a different views. But really, when you look and add up those number of years, and you look at that time when that one king said that Israel can go restore their city, and you add up all those years, it lands right about the time of Jesus. And really, at the end of his ministry, when Jesus went to be crucified in Israel, or in Jerusalem. And so, here, to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and 62 weeks. The streets shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times.

And after the 62 weeks, Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself. And so here is a reference to Messiah being cut off. Being cut off is a euphemism, just a figure of speech, for being killed. But it says he won't be killed for himself. And isn't that interesting? That's exactly what happened. Jesus was killed, but not for his own sins, not for his own crimes, but on our behalf, for us. And the people of the prince, now this is talking about somebody else, the people of the prince, who is to come, shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, until the end of the war, desolations are determined. Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week.

But in the middle of the week, he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering, and on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate. And so there's this description, after the 69 weeks, there's one final week, in which, and the language here is confusing, and we won't necessarily get into it, but we'll actually see in Mark 13 here, that there's a reference to this passage about this desolation, this desolation. And when we get to that actual passage, we'll go back and review this.

But something is going to happen in that last week, that last seven years after the Messiah comes, and he's cut off. If you turn just a few pages over to Daniel 12, we're going to see another reference to this. Daniel 12, verse 1. And it says this, at that time, Michael, talking about Michael the archangel, shall stand up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people.

[14 : 38] And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was, since there was a nation, even to that time. There's going to be a time of trouble. This is what tribulation means. Tribulation and trouble are synonyms. There will be a time of trouble, and notice what it says about that time of trouble, such as never was, since there was a nation. There will be more trouble, more tribulation, than has ever come in the past. And we're going to see a reference to that, too, as we go through Mark chapter 13. Go ahead and also turn to Jeremiah. Jeremiah chapter 30. This is a little bit before Daniel, so if you're at Daniel. Am I getting that right? That's before Daniel, isn't it? Yeah.

Go back a few chapters, and you'll find Jeremiah. Jeremiah chapter 30 also has a similar reference. Jeremiah chapter 30, and verse 1. And if you can't find it, that's okay. You can just follow along with me. Jeremiah chapter 30, verse 1. It says this, the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, thus speaks the Lord God of Israel, saying, write in a book for yourself all the words that I have spoken to you. For behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, that I will bring back from captivity my people Israel and Judah, says the Lord, and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it. This is a time Jeremiah is writing this when the people of Israel, they have been taken away captive. They're living in foreign lands, but there's a promise here that I'm going to bring them back to their land. Verse 4. Now these are the words that the Lord spoke concerning Israel and Judah. For thus says the Lord, we have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. So there's something, this is not good news. This is something bad that's happening. Ask now and see whether a man is ever in labor with a child. Has anybody ever seen that, a man in labor with a child? No? Well, things are getting a little confusing today, right?

And so some people are a little bit confused, but yeah, men don't have, don't go into labor. Men don't have children like women do. But this is what he's seeing. It's like there's these men, but they're going, it's like they're in labor with a child. So why, so why do I see every man with his hands on his loins like a woman in labor and travail, and all faces turned pale? Something intense is going on here.

Verse 7. Alas, for that day is great, so that none is like it, and it is the time of Jacob's trouble.

But he shall be saved out of it. This is a time called the time of Jacob's trouble, and I believe this is talking about that same seven-year period. We'll finish this out. Verse 8 and 9. For it shall come to pass in that day, says the Lord of hosts, that I will break his yoke from your neck and will burst your bonds. Foreigners shall no more enslave them, but they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up for them. Remember that Jesus, the Messiah, was prophesied to come from the lineage of David. He would be from the line of David. And Jesus, we see both on his mother's side and his adopted father's side, were from the lineage of David.

[18 : 26] After this time of tribulation is going to be a time where the kingdom is restored. There's going to be a time of intense persecution and pain and suffering, but then at the end of it will come this glorious kingdom. Jeremiah 23 verse 5. For the sake of time, we don't necessarily need to turn there, but here's what Jeremiah 23 verse 5 says this. Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, that I will raise to David, again from the line of David, a branch of righteousness. A king shall reign and prosper and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. So this is a time of a kingdom being established where there is a king coming and he's going to establish righteousness in the earth.

Isaiah says something similar about this kingdom. Isaiah chapter 9 verse 6 says this, For unto us a child is born, and unto us a son is given, and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, and of the increase of his government and the peace and peace there shall be no end. His government will not be limited to one small portion of the earth, it will increase to cover the entire globe.

And of the peace, the peace that he will establish will have no end. Upon the throne of David and over his kingdom to order it and to establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward and even forever, the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. God's going to bring this to pass. He's going to make this happen. Daniel, we go back to Daniel, if you're still there, you can go to Daniel chapter 7, and Daniel speaks of this same kingdom. Daniel chapter 7 verse 13, And I was watching in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven. He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And then to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom, the one which shall not be destroyed. There's another reference to this kingdom that will come and bring righteousness to the whole earth. Well, who is this Messiah that's going to come? Well, today we know that that is Jesus. If we look at the beginning of some of the Gospels, specifically Luke, Mary had an angel come to her. It was actually the same angel that came to Daniel. His name was Gabriel. The same angel that came and gave the message about what was going to happen with this Messiah that came to Daniel, came to Mary to tell her about this baby that she was inexplicably had in her womb. And this is what the angel said in Luke chapter 1 verse 31,

And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call his name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the son of the highest, and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever. And of his kingdom, there will be no end. This is who Jesus was. He is the Messiah who was promised to come, that would sit on the throne of David and establish a kingdom, not only over Jerusalem and Israel, but also would rule over the entire world. Then Jesus, when he actually came and arrived, he had a message that he preached to the people. This is after his introduction by John, who baptized him. And it says this, this is actually from the very beginning of our study in Mark chapter 1. In Mark chapter 1 verse 14, it says this,

Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, and this is the very beginning of his ministry, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God. The gospel just means good news. Preaching the good news of the kingdom of God. The thing that the prophets had been prophesying about for thousands of years, and saying, here's what he would say, the time is fulfilled, the fulfillment is now, and the kingdom of God is at hand.

[23 : 28] Repent and believe in the gospel, the good news. And that was his message to the people of Israel. You see, Jesus came, he arrived right around the end of that 69th week that Daniel, that we read about in Daniel from the angel Gabriel.

And at the end, Messiah would be cut off, but not for himself. And then the final week after that is this period that the Bible calls the time of Jacob's trouble, also called the tribulation.

And then after that will come the kingdom. And Jesus, really his, a lot of his ministry is preaching and talking about the kingdom, and what will it be like in the kingdom, and how to prepare for the kingdom.

And how really you should be willing to do just about anything, to sell everything that you have in order to gain this kingdom that is coming. That is what, a lot of what Jesus taught about, and spoke about. So you can see why many would say, well this tribulation that Jesus is speaking of, it must have already happened. Because you have 69 weeks, and then you have the 70th week, and it should happen right then.

But there's this plot twist that happens in the Bible. You know, you, you, any of you like to read books, you know, novels, and sometimes we read the Bible just kind of scattershot, and that's fine.

[25 : 10] You don't have to always read the Bible from beginning to end. But if you open up a novel, for example, I think about, has anybody ever read the Chronicles of Narnia, the Lion, the Rich, and the Wardrobe? Yeah. I see my daughter here, she's doing it.

And if you know that story, there's, there's some very different scenes. And if you just, you know, read one page, and then you skip, and you know, maybe go to the middle and read another page, and then go to the end and read another page, you might be really confused as to what's going on.

But if you read from beginning to end, you'll identify these important moments where there's a plot twist, and you will see why things are different at the end than they were at the beginning.

You read in the beginning, and there's these school children in World War II England, and then you go to the middle of the book, and there's fanciful creatures and talking beavers, and what in the world just happened?

And you missed an important plot twist. There's this wardrobe involved, right? And sorry if I'm ruining the movie for anybody or the book, but I think most of us know this. And so what we're going to do is we're just going to look at what this plot twist was that happened.

[26 : 28] And we're going to, we're going to do this by looking at Romans chapter 9. So turn with me to Romans chapter 9. I think this passage, or these two chapters, really summarize, and we're going to not necessarily read all of these two chapters, but it's going to summarize for us what, really what happened here, and why there is this, did this tribulation actually happen, and we missed it, or is it still future?

Okay, Romans 9 chapter 1. This is Paul, and he's, Paul is a, he's a Jew, but he was sent to the Gentiles, if you know his story at all. He says this in Romans 9 chapter 1, I tell the truth in Christ, and I'm not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and continued grief in my heart, for I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen, according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises, of whom are the fathers, and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. He's saying, my heart is so, I love my own people, and God made all these promises to them, and I wish that I could even give up my own life, and it seems even, maybe even my own salvation, so that they could have the promises that were promised to them.

We're going to skip down to verse 30 in this chapter, Romans 9, verse 30, because he's describing, he's saying, you know, my people, they rejected their Messiah, and we see that in the storyline of the Bible.

Jesus comes, and he's actually killed with the cries of crucify him, crucify him, from his own people. And then later on, even after he is preached by his own disciples, after he's gone up into heaven, there's continuing rejection.

And so, the Jews stumbled over their Messiah, Romans 9, verse 30, what shall we say then, that Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith?

[28 : 53] But Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness. Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at the stumbling stone. As it is written, behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and a rock of offense, and whoever believes on him will not be put to shame. You see, the Jewish people, they stumbled over their Messiah. This is the one that was sent for them, specifically. Now, this was a hidden thing, but it wasn't just for them, but also for the whole world. But it was prophesied that this Messiah was coming, he would be the Savior of Israel. But they stumbled over him at the time.

But there's this reference to the Gentile people in which God went to the Gentile people, and we'll see more about that in a second. But if we go on to Romans chapter 11, Romans chapter 11, verse 1, it says this, I say then, has God cast away his people?

Paul. So, the storyline goes like this. Israel rejected their Messiah, and we see Paul for a while in the book of Acts. This book of Acts is this transition book, and Paul's going to the synagogues first, where the Jewish people are, and he's preaching Christ to them, and so many times they reject the message. And then he goes to the Gentile people, and many of them, not all of them, but many of them says, well, we like this message, tell us more. And so, through the book of Acts, we find that eventually there's this proclamation from Paul saying, listen, you guys decide you don't want the Messiah, I'm going to the Gentile people. They'll receive the message.

And so, there's this turning to the Gentile people. I say then, has God cast away his people? Certainly not. For I also am an Israelite of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not cast away his people, whom he foreknew. So, his people, the Israelites are not cast away, at least not permanently. Verse 11, Romans 11, chapter 11, I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not. So, they've stumbled, but their fall is not permanent. I think that's what he's trying to say. Their fall is not permanent. But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles. Now, if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness? And so, what he's saying here is, Israel fell, they stumbled over that stumbling block. And so, God did something with a new group of people, the non-Jews, the Gentiles, and he's saying,

I'm going to bring them salvation. Without Israel, and for a time, anyway, I'm going to put their plan on hold, and I'm going to bring salvation to these Gentiles.

[32 : 07] And what reason is he going to do that? It says, to make them jealous, to provoke them to jealousy. Go on further down to verse 25. For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery. Notice he uses this word mystery. Mystery is the opposite of prophecy. There were things that were proclaimed that were going to be happened, that were going to happen.

But then this here, this going to the Gentiles was not something that the prophets had foretold or spoke of. That you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion. That blindness, in part, has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. So there's going to be a time in which the fullness of the Gentiles comes in. And then it says this, and so all Israel will be saved. As is written, the deliverer will come out of Zion, and he will turn away ungodliness from Jacob, for this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins. So when the time of the Gentiles is finished, God's going to restore, going back to his plan to restore Israel to their kingdom. His original plan that he was going to do with them. And so we call this the difference between mystery and prophecy. There is this prophesied program of God with his people, the ethnic Israel, who are under the law, and there is this plan foretold by all the prophets. And everything was going swimmingly until this time. And then there's this unprophesied time, this mystery. And that's the day and age in which we live. And there is a reference in, for time's sake, we won't necessarily look at the passage, but in 1 Corinthians chapter 4, Paul mentions a time called the catching away of God's people, where

God's people will be caught up into the air. And we call that the rapture. And the rapture is going to come and take away God's people. And I believe, and many others do, that that will be the time when the time of the Gentiles is complete.

We don't know when that's going to be, but that will be the end of the time of the Gentiles. And then the time for God's people, Israel, to be established again in their kingdom, will start back up, that plan. And that will begin with this seven year, that final 70th week, which will happen with Israel at the center.

So that's the context that we're approaching this passage from. This passage in Mark chapter 13 is focused on Israel and their plan. It's a passage about God's plan for Israel. I don't believe that this is something that we should expect that we will live through.

[35 : 16] I think that's, I think that's, there's some important implications there. But as we study through this, we're going to study through this passage, we're going to consider and weigh kind of those who think, because there are many who believe that we will go through this, and that this is a future for us. Some who believe that this already happened to Israel specifically. And we'll compare and contrast as we go through that. I was going to take the time and kind of read through this whole passage, but I think it'll probably be better, because we're going to actually start just from this point forward, just going verse by verse through this, and looking specifically at what's going to happen during this seven year tribulation period. We'll have opportunities to compare it to what Daniel said, and also if we look forward in the Bible to the book of Revelation, which actually provides even more detail about the end times than either Jesus provided or Daniel. But we'll see, hopefully, how all these different prophecies align. Some provide more details, and you know, when it comes, and I've talked about this a couple weeks ago, when it comes to the end times, things can get kind of confusing, pretty cloudy. And to be honest, I think that was to a degree intentional. God doesn't want to provide, you know, an HD picture of exactly what's going to happen in the end times. He wants us to know enough to have some comfort and hope, but not give every detail. So I think it's reasonable, it's common for people to have some cloudiness about what's going to happen in the end. But we'll do our best, and we'll see what we can clear up. But we just provided more context today about what we're going to read, and then next week we're going to start verse by verse. I thought I was going to get a little bit further, but we're going to start verse by verse, and looking at this destruction of the temple that's talked about, and deceptions that are going to come, and earthquakes, and fighting against nation, and all those things. But was that overview context helpful for anybody? All right, I see some nods. All right, well, with our final ten minutes here, so let's go ahead and we're going to have our communion service. I already talked, so just a little prep here, I already talked about our benevolence fund, so what we're going to do here, I'll just give you some brief instruction, because every church does this a little bit differently. And so

I want to make sure, you know, I've been to some churches, and they start to do the Lord's Supper together, and I'm not sure, should I eat the bread now, or should I wait, or whatever, so I'm going to give you, if you're new here especially, some little instruction. We're going to take the Lord's Supper, we're going to do the bread, we'll take that, and then we'll pass out the bread, and then we'll all eat that together, and then we'll pass out the juice, and by the way, it's juice, it's not actual wine, so if you're concerned about that, it's just grape juice, and then we'll pass that out, and then we'll all take that together as we read the scripture. And then after that, we're going to take up our benevolence offering, and during that time, we have a song that we'll sing together while we're taking up that offering, and then we'll be dismissed about that. But a few other things, so some people ask, you know, well, am I allowed to do this? Do I have to be a member of the church? No, this is something for any believer. If you trust in Christ, we welcome you to join us in this. Of course, you don't have to, but if you'd like to join with us, and you're not a regular part of our church, if you are a believer, feel free to join us. Some people have questions about kids. We allow our kids to do this with us. Some people are less comfortable with that. We completely leave that up to the parents. But this is a time, and this is important, this is not a time for us to get right with God, to, it's not something where we're getting something additional that God needs to give us each and every week. You know, some churches teach that, that you have to take this communion in order to receive some extra benefit from God. And we'll actually talk about that as we pass this out. I'm going to look at some scriptures that speak to that. But this is a time of remembrance.

This is an opportunity to use some specific elements, just little pieces, excuse me, little pieces of bread and a little cup of juice to remember that time in the upper room where Jesus spent time with his disciples and what he actually accomplished for us. It's just a memory. It's just a remembrance. And that's what we're doing this morning. So if I have the ushers come up and we're going to do this a little bit differently. Last time we passed out the bread and the juice at the same time and it got a little bit confusing. So today we're going to do, do them separately. So I'll pass this to you guys. Yep. All right. And so go ahead and as they pass this out, we'll just take one of those pieces of bread. This is unleavened, by the way, which just kind of mimics what went on at the actual Last

Supper. Because that was part of what was the Passover meal that the Jews did. The bread was unleavened and it has symbolism to it. Because leaven is a symbol of sin. And so Jesus' body, his body was broken for us. He was crucified.

But the Bible says that the just or the righteous one died for the unjust. The righteous for the unrighteous. Jesus never sinned. But he died as a sinner in our place. And we'll look at this verse, Colossians 2 verse 8. And this speaks a little bit about what Christ accomplished for us. Beware, lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the traditions of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. For in Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And you are complete in him, who is the head of all principality and power. And you being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, he is made alive together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And he has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. You see, when

[42 : 47] Jesus died on that cross, there were these requirements. It was the law. The law given to Israel was constantly guilty, guilty, guilty, guilty. And it was right and true. Because all of us, if we look inwardly, all of us have sinned, and the Bible says it explicitly, all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, of what really is a reasonable expectation for how we ought to live. Loving our neighbor. And all of us have failed to do that. So Christ has accomplished something on the cross for us, and he did something that was a finished work. Not something, and again, when we take this, this isn't giving any extra benefit to us. Everything is complete. In fact, that's what this passage says. We are complete in him just by trusting in what he did. So I'm going to read this passage from 1 Corinthians, where Paul gives instruction on how we ought to do this. It says this in 1 Corinthians 11, verse 23,

For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the same night in which he was betrayed, he took bread. And when he had given thanks, he broke it, and he said, Take, eat. This is my body, which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me. So let's do that together.

Wow. So Jesus' body was broken for us, and now we're going to pass out this juice, fruit of the vine.

And while they're passing out, I'm going to share another scripture. This is from Romans chapter 8. This is again Paul speaking about what was accomplished on our behalf through that cross.

It says this, There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, and that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh on account of sin. He condemned sin in the flesh. You see, there's this law. It's part of the basic rudimentary principles of the world. The law that says, He who sins must die. That's how the world works. When you do something wrong, you got to pay the penalty. The penalty for our sins is death. And God was not satisfied, but that's how things had to be. So he did something to make a way, to make a pathway for those of us who are willing, willing to trust in him. He made a sacrifice, something that the law couldn't do, because it was weak through our own flesh. The law was good, but our flesh was not. And God accomplished this by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to look like us, to look like sinners like us, even though he wasn't one. And he condemned sin in the flesh. So that now, based on our trust in what Christ accomplished, and that alone, by just looking to the cross, believing that Jesus died for me, and receiving that gift for ourselves, that we can have confidence that we have eternal life with him, that all of our sins have been taken away, and that there is no more condemnation coming from the heavens towards us, even though we do deserve it, right, a lot of times. But it's gone. So there's no reason for us to look to the heavens and think, man, God is, there's condemnation coming from the heavens. There's no more condemnation if we're trusting in Christ. Isn't that amazing? And so, keeping that in mind, we're going to read this last passage, and drink this together to remember what was accomplished for us. In the same manner, he also took the cup after supper, saying,

[48 : 06] This cup is the new covenant in my blood. This do as often as you drink it in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat of this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till he comes. Let's remember the Lord.

He's so very good to us, isn't he? What God accomplished for us, what Jesus did for us. You know, he didn't have to. Did you know that? I think some people get the idea, oh, God, he had to do all these things. I mean, he's the one that created us and got us into this mess. No, you know what? We got ourselves into this mess, and he didn't have to accomplish this for us, but he did. I'm so grateful. I'm going to pray, and then we're going to take up this offering, and while we're taking up the offering, we're going to sing a song together. But let's close in a word of prayer. Father, we love you, and we thank you for all that you accomplished for us. We're thankful for the opportunity to remember together as a body of believers what you did for us. We thank you so much. And our gratitude has no end, because your love for us seems to have no end at all. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen. Amen. All right. All right, so we're going to take up the offering, but if you have a hymnal, open it up to number 349. We'll do this together. It's a simple song. Some of you may know it by heart. And Sophie, are you going to play this for us? Great. So we'll have a little bit of musical accompaniment. But it's a simple song, and there's just two verses.

We'll sing both of them through. So we'll get an introduction. Go ahead whenever you're ready. Oh, how He loves you and me. Oh, how He loves you and me.

Jesus to Calvary did go. Jesus to Calvary did go.

[51 : 05] His love for sinners to show. What He did there brought hope from despair. Oh, how He loves you. Oh, how He loves me. Oh, how He loves you and me.

You know He loves you. Do you love Him? Amen. Let's pray. We're going to close the service, but remember that we have a fellowship meal, and we'd love all of you to join us if you can.

So please stay if you're able. I'm going to go ahead and close in prayer, and this will be our prayer for the meal, too. Okay, so we can go ahead and start eating once everything's ready to go.

But let's go ahead and pray together. Father, again, we thank You for Your love for us, and we just cherish every opportunity that we have to share our love for You because of what You did for us.

Thank You for this body of believers, all that love You, and we have this unity together in our love for You, our love for the Lord. We look forward to fellowshiping together, those who will join us after the service, and we thank You for the food that we're about to eat, and for all of Your generous blessings that we experience here on the earth.

[52 : 46] But not just the earthly blessings that we experience, but also we thank You for the spiritual blessings that You have given to us as well. We thank You for all these things. In Jesus' name, amen.

Amen. All right. Thanks, everybody.