



CrossRoads Notes:

Title: Gratitude, God's Antidote for Guilt
Theme: Resting in the Price Christ Paid for You
Topic: Thanksgiving Communion Service
Series: Full Measure of Thanksgiving

Introduction: *Medical research tells us that gratitude is one of the healthiest emotions that a person can express. The more a person understands and responds to God's Antidote for the guilt that comes from living outside of God's will, the more he expresses a peace that comes from the Lord.*

John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."

Proposition: *I would propose to you that responding to God's antidote for the guilt that comes from living for the flesh, loving the world, and listening to the lies of the devil, will enable you to express true gratitude as you live for Him.*

Interrogative Sentence: *Just who should we focus on as we partake in the Biblical ordinance, "Communion?"*

Transitional Sentence: *The first step toward enjoying healthy gratitude in the "Communion" service is believe the truth. It is our sins that put Christ on the Cross of Calvary. Romans 3:23 says, "There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus." To have sinned (*hamartane*) means to have missed a mark on the way. (The Complete Word Study Dictionary) As I study the whole counsel of the Word of God, sinning is missing the intended purpose for which God created you.*

Sin is lawlessness, a willful act of breaking the law or choosing to be ignorant of the Word of God. (1 John 3:4)

Before anyone can express true thanksgiving in the "Communion" service he must understand the nature of the sinful heart apart from Lordship of Christ. This truth is powerfully proclaimed in Proverbs 14:12, "There is a way that seems right unto man, but in the end it leads to death." There is a phrase that holds such a powerful truth, "You must get a man lost before he can be saved." Unless mankind sees themselves as sinners, they will not search for the only One who holds the remedy for the sinful state of the spiritual heart.

For application's sake: When it comes to (omit the) obeying the Lord's call to partake in "Communion," do you understand that it was your sin that put Christ on the Cross? When you eat of the bread, which represents Jesus' body given for us and drink of cup of the new covenant through Jesus' blood, is there an uneasiness that comes over you as the realization hits you it is the sin you committed just this week that put Christ on

the Cross? Great men of God, like the Apostle Paul (Romans 7:7-25) and Martin Luther grieved often over their failure to subdue the flesh. Do we?

Transitional Sentence: *Once the child of God recognizes that his sins put Christ on the Cross, he should take time to understand what Christ took for those sins.* The Lord's prophet wrote about Jesus' suffering in Isaiah 52:14, "Just as there were many who were appalled at Him – His appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and His form marred beyond human likeness..." Isaiah 53:6 says, "We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid upon Him [that is Christ] the iniquity of us all."

This thanksgiving season is an opportunity for Christians to rest upon the truths of Isaiah 53:4-5, "Surely He took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered Him stricken by God, smitten by Him, and afflicted. But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed."

Focusing on what Christ took upon Himself, the sins of the world, enables us to enjoy complete healing for every harsh word spoken to us, find rest in His intercession for every wrong deed done unto us and brings true healing to our spiritual hearts every time it becomes injured.

Walter B. Night wrote, "In a vision, Martin Luther seemed to see Satan approaching him with a large book under his arm. 'This book' said Satan, 'contains the record of the sins of your life!' As Satan begins to read, Luther said, 'Stop! Here is another Book – the Word of God. It says, "But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from all sin.'" (1 John 1:7)

For application's sake: When you come to "Communion" do you approach it as just another religious observance or is there an assurance in your spiritual heart that Christ bore your iniquities and that His sacrifice satisfies God our Father?

Transitional Sentence: *Knowing that it is our sins that put Christ on the Cross, and understanding that Christ bears the entire burden of our sins before God, enable Christians to enjoy the benefits of forgiveness of sins.* 1 John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

Grasping three truths in this part of the message will enable you to have real gratitude as you partake in "Communion." One truth is that confession of sins leads to peace before God. "Confess" (*homologeō*) can mean to agree with. (The Complete Word Study Dictionary; Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament; Vines Amplified Expository Dictionary of the New Testament) The second truth to grasp in 1 John 1:9 is God's faithfulness to forgive sins. Isaiah 43:25 says, "I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more."

The Lord treats repentant sin placed under the blood of Christ as if He has completely forgotten the act. (Jamieson, Fausset and Brown)

Thirdly, Christians may enjoy the purifying blood of Christ. The promise is not only forgiveness, but the Lord will "...purify us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9) To "purify" (*katharizo*) is to cleanse the spiritual heart from the filth, pollution and contamination of sin. (The Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible; The Complete Word Study Dictionary) As the child of God is sanctified through the washing of the Word of God and the cleansing work of the Holy Spirit, he is more and more becoming like Jesus Christ, thus he is being freed from the admixture (Vines Amplified Expository Dictionary) a life controlled by the flesh and the world, to enjoying a Holy Spirit led life.

In Closing: Christians may come to "Communion" knowing that it was their sin that put Christ on the Cross, fully understanding just what Jesus took for them and resting upon the truth that God does not remember sins against them. Christians have every opportunity to be used of the Lord in great and mighty ways as they trust in Christ. Christians have every right to, and should, express a life of "Gratitude," and enjoy God's antidote for sin. Rest in God's never-ending love and forgiveness.

Let us partake in "Communion."