**Sunday, February 5, 2012**

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**Welcome** – Greg Snow

**Bless the Lord, O My Soul** – Psalm 103:1-4

 *Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!*

*Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquity,*

*Who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit,*

*Who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,*

*Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!*

**Song of Praise** – *For All You’ve Done*

**For God So Loved the World** -*John 3:16*

*For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son,*

*That whoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life.*

**Songs of Worship** – *Here Is Love/Once Again*

**Love Lustres at Calvary** *(Puritan Prayer)*

MY FATHER,
Enlarge my heart, warm my affections, open my lips, supply words that proclaim ‘Love Lustres at Calvary’. There grace removes my burdens and heaps them on Thy Son, made a transgressor, a curse, and sin for me; there the sword of Thy justice smote the Man, Thy fellow; there Thy infinite attributes were magnified, and infinite atonement was made; there infinite punishment was due, and infinite punishment was endured.

Christ was all anguish that I might be all joy, cast off that I might be brought in, trodden down as an enemy that I might be welcomed as friend, surrendered to hell’s worst that I might attain heaven’s best, stripped that I might be clothed, wounded that I might be healed, athirst that I might drink, tormented that I might be comforted, made a shame that I might inherit glory, entered darkness that I might have eternal light.

My Savior wept that all tears might be wiped from my eyes, groaned that I might have endless song, endured all pain that I might have unfading health, bore a thorny crown that I might have a glory-diadem, bowed His head that I might uplift mine, experienced reproach that I might receive welcome, closed His eyes in death that I might gaze on unclouded brightness, expired that I might for ever live.

O Father, who spared not Thine only Son that Thou mightiest spare me, all this transfer Thy love designed and accomplished; help me to adore Thee by lips and life. O that my every breath might be ecstatic praise, my every step buoyant with delight, as I see my enemies crushed, Satan baffled, defeated, destroyed, sin buried in the ocean of reconciling blood, hell’s gates closed, heaven’s portal open.

Go forth, O conquering God, and show me the cross, mighty to subdue, comfort and save!

**Song of Worship** – *The Look*

**Offering**

**Cliing to the Cross *(Charles H. Spurgeon)***

“We owe all to Jesus crucified. What is your life, my brethren, but the cross? Whence comes the bread of your soul but from the cross? What is your joy but the cross? What is your delight, what is your heaven, but the Blessed One, once crucified for you, who ever lives to make intercession for you?

Cling to the cross, then. Put both arms around it! Hold to the Crucified, and never let Him go. Come afresh to the cross at this moment, and rest there now and forever! Then, with the power of God resting upon you, go forth and preach the cross! Tell out the story of the bleeding Lamb.

Repeat the wondrous tale, and nothing else. Only proclaim that Jesus died for sinners. The cross held up by a babe’s hand is just as powerful as if a giant held it up. The power lies in the Word itself, or rather in the Holy Spirit who works by it and with it…

Believe in Christ crucified and preach boldly in His name, and you shall see great and gladsome things. His reward shall parallel His sorrows. Let no man’s heart fail him! Christ has died! Atonement is complete! God is satisfied! Peace is proclaimed!

Heaven glitters with proofs of mercy already bestowed upon ten thousand times ten thousand! Hell is trembling, heaven adoring, earth waiting. Advance, ye saints, to certain victory! You shall overcome through the blood of the Lamb.”

**Songs of Praise –** *My Savior’s Love/Jesus Paid It All*

**Message** – *“The Lord’s Supper; Why we Practice Closed Communion”*

*Scripture Reference: Luke 22:14-23; Acts 2:41-47; 1 Corinthians 11:17-34*

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**Today let us look at the subject of the Lord’s Supper and why we have adopted the practice of closed communion. Let us approach this topic and seek to find our answers from God’s Holy Word by asking a series of questions.**

* **By practicing “closed communion” we are not saying to those who are excluded from the Lord ’s Table that they are NOT saved.**
* **Churches that practice open communion appear to be more loving and Christ like. But in reality they are unwilling to do the hard work of protecting the unity and the purity of the Lord ’s Table.**

**1. What is the Lord’s Supper?**

The Lord’s Supper is an ordinance given to the church as a remembrance of our Lord’s great work for us. Like the preaching of God’s Word and baptism, the Lord’s Supper is a means of grace. Wayne Grudem states in his systematic theology work that several things are symbolized and affirmed in the Lord’s Supper.

1. Christ’s death 1Cor.11:26

2. Our participation in the benefits of Christ’s death Matt26:26

3. Spiritual nourishment John 6:53-57

4. The unity of believers 1Cor.10:17

5. Christ affirms His love for me

6. Christ affirms that all of the blessings of salvation are reserved for me

7. I affirm my faith in Christ

**2. Who was given the Lord’s Supper?**

The Lord’s Supper was given by our Lord Jesus Christ on the night He was betrayed. It was administered to the Apostles and was to be instituted in the Church as an ordinance until Christ’s return. Jesus, by His instruction and example, gave us this ordinance to be followed.

 **3. Who is the Church that the ordinance was given to?**

It is the misunderstanding of who the Church actually is that leads to so many problems concerning the Lord’s Supper.

By definition the Church is made up of those who are truly saved. The word speaks of “to summons an assembly.” We who have heard the outward proclamation of the gospel, and have responded to the inward call of the Spirit of God make up the Church. As believers, we are a part of the invisible, universal Church, as well as called to participate in a local Church, which is the visible Church.

 **4. Who is responsible for administrating the Lord’s Supper?**

This ordinance, once again, was given with all authority from our Lord Jesus Christ unto the Apostles and was to be instituted in the Church as an ordinance until Christ’s return. (1Cor11:23)

It is the responsibility of the Shepherd of God’s people to continue the practice of the Lord’s Supper in right manner until Christ returns. (Eph.4:11-16)

 **5. Who may and should come to the Lord’s Table?**

As God’s Children we have a right and obligated responsibility to the Lord’s Table. (Acts2:41-47)

Who should come? Those who meet the following conditions:

1. The Saved - Those who have been convicted of their sins and who have professed their faith in Jesus Christ’s finished work on the cross.

2. The Baptized - Those who have professed faith in the work of Christ, and have followed Him in baptism (by immersion) as a sign of our desire to walk with Christ.

3. Those in Right Fellowship with the Lord and His people…. No open public sin. (1Cor5:1-13)

4. Self Examination is important, so we do not bring public shame to our Lord, His Church, and ourselves . If we allow God’s Word to search our hearts and we continually confess our private sins, we will guard against our sin becoming public. (1Cor11:28)

Wayne Grudem states……

*“Our Baptism is a symbol of our Beginning and the Lord’s Supper is a symbol of our continuing!”*

**6. Who should not come or not be allowed to come to Lord’s Table?**

We can clearly see that the following individuals should not come to the Lord’s Table, and if necessary, be prevented from coming…….

1. The unsaved; those who are not converted to Christ. (1Cor11:29)

2. Those who profess faith, yet not obedient to baptism. (Acts 2:41)

3. Those saved but living in open sin (1Cor5:11)

4. Those under church discipline (1Cor 5:11, 2 Thess 3:6, Matt 18:17 & 2 Tim 3:5)

**7. Why should we qualify its attendees, and protect the unity and purity of the Lord’s Table through the practice of “closed communion?”**

1. To protect individuals from coming to the table in an unworthy manner therefore bringing judgment upon themselves.

2. To allow an unconverted individual to participate in the observance of the Lord’s Supper, is to give that person a false hope of salvation by not confronting them with the Gospel.

3. To practice open communion is to hinder, undermine, and clearly cripple any attempt to practice church discipline

4. By practicing closed communion, we have a great teaching tool for the Church. Those who are not allowed to participate can ask themselves, and us, “Why am I not allowed to participate?”

5. **Conclusion:** The practice of “closed communion” is an obvious conclusion after looking at the Scripture and the responsibility given to the local Church to care for one other.

**Time of Prayer**