

Sermon

It's All About The Blood Holy Thursday, April 5th, 2012 Rev. Dr. Alfonso O. Espinosa

Introduction: It's Hard To Follow All That Happened On That First Holy Thursday, The Night Jesus Was Betrayed:

- A. Preparations were made for the Passover meal.**
- B. Jesus washed His disciples' feet.**
- C. While partaking of the Passover meal, He predicted that one of His disciples would betray Him.**
- D. Jesus then conducted The Last Supper about half-way through the Passover meal and gave to His Church The Lord's Supper.**
- E. He then gave a new commandment -- though we must also remember that commandment in the Supper itself: "Do this in remembrance of Me." – the one recorded at John 13:34 is: "to love one another (John 13:34)."**
- F. Jesus then continued with a farewell discourse to His disciples and gave the promise of the Holy Spirit.**

Part I: Blood is all over these events:

- A. First the Passover meal. Recall the original Passover: When the Lord entered into Egypt and took the life of every first-born male in Egypt (this was the 10th plague), but the Israelites were protected by spreading the blood of an unblemished lamb on their door posts and lintels. When the Lord saw the blood, He passed over His people and they were spared from condemnation. The blood kept them marked by life for as Leviticus 17:11 says, "the life is...in the blood."**
- B. Jesus' washed the disciples' feet: This event is the least blood-related or so it seems, but the John 13 text is clear that Jesus did not get up to express this demonstration and lesson in servant-hood and love until "...Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father...(1)" In the mind of Christ He was moved to do this while anticipating His crucifixion when His blood would be shed.**
- C. His prediction of betrayal would lead to the shedding of His blood.**
- D. He conducted The Last Supper and gave to us His Church the new covenant in His blood.**
- E. He gave the new commandment to love, but only in connection to His saving ministry of giving a ransom for many, an unmistakable allusion to the shedding – you guessed it – of His blood. This is why we must also keep before us the**

commandment to “do this” (in reference to the Holy Supper)...so that by receiving His blood we have His life that produces love in us.

- F. Jesus then gave the farewell discourse that assured the disciples that they would go forth with the power of the Holy Spirit and we mustn't forget that in the case of all the apostles who were listening (with the exception of Judas Iscariot who had already left the room at this point, and John who was never martyred, but exiled to Patmos) that every one of the apostles would themselves be martyred...they would for the faith in the Lord Jesus and for the spreading of the Gospel have their _____ spilled in martyrdom.
- G. Again, blood is everywhere on Holy Thursday.

Part II: It Makes Sense:

- A. There is no salvation apart from it! The blood of the cross of Calvary must be received, for there is no salvation apart from it. Jesus said, *“Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink (John 6:55-56).”*
- B. Yes, we receive the benefits of Christ's atoning blood even through the proclamation of the Gospel, but our Lord desired to leave no doubt that you would be connected to His Good Friday blood: Jesus used His mastery over time and space as God on Holy Thursday to give His saving blood He would shed on the following day, Good Friday.
- C. He didn't just talk about love. He extended the greatest love through the greatest sacrificial gift: His very own blood.

Part III and Conclusion: This Messes with Us:

- A. When people hear what Moses did -- as recorded in our Old Testament reading -- when Moses threw the blood on the people, it is easy for us to think or say, “That's gross!”
- B. When the Early Christians worshipped in the catacombs during the great persecutions and the Roman Empire public heard that they gathered there to drink blood, the Christians were considered strange to say the least!
- C. When we realize the response of our rationale minds to the Lord's Supper...we are unbelievers in our sinful nature. We think to ourselves, “How can this be?!”
- D. So yes, there are all kinds of negative reactions.
- E. But these doubts are all covered by His blood as well.
- F. By His blood the truth is known:
 - 1. This is YOUR Passover. Through the blood of Christ on this Holy Thursday, God passes over your sins and forgives you.

2. This Savior has also washed YOU! To receive His blood is to be washed by His blood!
3. The betraying sin in you that has rebelled against your Savior is also covered by His blood and on account of His blood He promises to remember your sins no more (Isaiah 43:25).
4. This Holy Supper is kept before you for the rest of your life to assure you that you will always be in His saving blood. So that now the doubts are replaced with simple faith: Jesus says that this is His blood, so I believe it, this is true, this is so; this is fact.
5. And because you have received the greatest love through His blood, you are now enabled to follow His new commandment – the *mandatum* – of Maundy Thursday: Do This...Receive His Blood...Receive His Love, and Love.
6. And finally, those who receive His blood, like you and like me, are also assured that where the blood of Christ is given, there the Holy Spirit abides...those who receive Christ have the Holy Spirit...and He will testify to this truth today and forever: You have been redeemed dear Christian by Jesus' blood!