

66-03-01.wpd—Lessons from Three Meals
 Communion, forgiveness, attentiveness, service, invitation
 Rev. 3:20
 Holy Communion symbolizes the whole Christian life.

INTRODUCTION:

–**Text** could be taken as a “Communion message”— **Rev 3:20** (ESV), *Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.*

–Jesus asked us to take Communion, “in remembrance of me.” Eating at the Lord’s Table, partaking of the bread and the cup, is a special time of *remembering our relationship to Jesus*. **HOM.idea**. This holy meal should remind us of several things, but I want to look at three passages about three different meals with Jesus, where three different aspects of the Christian life are taught.

I. At the Table of a Pharisee— Luke 7:36-50 (ESV), One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and took his place at the table. And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner." And Jesus answering said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he answered, "Say it, Teacher." "A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?" Simon answered, "The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt." And he said to him, "You have judged rightly." Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven--for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little." And he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this, who even forgives sins?" And he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

A. How much do we love Jesus...a little or a lot? How do we take the

Eucharist... in a ritualistic attitude or in an attitude of adoration and worship. (Try putting the Lord’s Table in the context of a meal that speaks about relationship— **Rev. 3:20**, *Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.*)

- B. [many lessons in this “meal” passage] One important lesson for *learning what helps us love Jesus better*: “he who is forgiven little, loves little” (Communion is a time for mutual sharing between us and Christ:
1. His sacrifice on the Cross, represented on the Table as His body and blood in the bread and the cup, is *an ongoing testimony of His love for us*.
 2. Our coming to the Table with a realization of *what our forgiveness cost Him* nurtures love in our hearts for Him.

TRANS: Holy Communion symbolizes the whole Christian life.

When you fellowship with Christ, whether at this Table or in your quiet times, remember your need of forgiveness and His cost in providing it. It will help your love for Christ grow. Let’s look at another meal....

II. At the Table of Martha, Luke 10:38-42 (ESV), Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me." But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her."

- A. If Jesus came for dinner at your house, would our *focus be on Him or on making sure our meal was impressive? Jesus diagnosed Martha’s problem as being “anxious and troubled about many things” (We too can have a wrong focus, *worrying about how to observe Communion*, about what decor our sanctuary has, about what Bible translation we should use, or about how our prayers sound.)*
- B. God wants our focus to be on Jesus: “Mary...sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving.”

TRANS: Jesus didn’t scold Martha’s service, but her focus. How attentive are we at Communion? God speaks during the Eucharist, often more clearly than at any other place or time. We need to be listeners...

III. At the Table of Jesus, John 13:1-17 (ESV), Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand." Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me." Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" Jesus said to him, "The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you." For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, "Not all of you are clean." When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

- A. When Jesus, King of the Universe performed the lowly slave's task of washing His disciples' feet, He gave us an example: "If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you."
- B. Holy Communion with Christ is not just about us, but about how our relationship with Him is the basis of our service to others. (At Communion, Jesus washes our feet again and again, empowering us by the laying down of His life on the Cross to serve others.)

CONCLUSION:

– **Holy Communion symbolizes the whole Christian life.** It speaks of *forgiveness, attentiveness, and service*, all of which come directly out of our intimate relationship with Jesus. But this relationship is ongoing. Every moment of the day, everyday, Jesus invites us to invite Him into our daily lives: "*Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.*"