

Communion Service at Wildwood

#1025

Study given by W.D. Frazee—April 15, 1967

As I think of the different one's coming together at St. Elmo, Slygo, Trenton, here at Wildwood, Tiftonia and all around, it makes me think of the homecoming when we all gather and sit down with Jesus. And for the first time, since the last time, He's going to partake of this fruit of the vine. He's looking forward to that reunion isn't He?

I was telling the folks at Trenton, this morning, if we realized the value of this service, this ordination service, we'll never miss a service if it's at all possible to be there. In all if I may just open my heart and talk with you for a few minutes before we turn to our text. Let me say this, friends, we are living in an age of gadgets and paraphernalia and put on and show off. We are living in an age when *all* kinds of things are bulging and moving. And if we're not careful these ordinances can be lost...what shall I say? Lost in the noise of the machinery.

In the ancient sanctuary service God gave His people quite a ritual. You can study it for a long time and there's still something more to learn about it. There were many feast days and a fast day. There were offerings day-by-day and then certain special offerings on certain special days. But when Jesus died on the cross, the veil on that temple in Jerusalem, what happened to it? It was "rent in twain" and that was God's way of saying what? All done. All through. And as Jesus organized His church, He gave it two ordinances, just two. And they're just about as simple as anything you could think of if you were hunting for something simple.

The first is what? Baptism, and that's very simple, friends. Water, as the doctor told us last night, is universal—it's all around. And Jesus simply took water and had His followers baptized, or immersed, in that water and He made that the sign of entrance into His spiritual field. And then to renew those baptismal vows, to remind us from time-to-time of His death, which baptism commemorates. But to keep that fresh in mind He gave us the Lord's Supper. Where the preparatory ordinance of humility. And that's simple too, isn't it? What could be more simple than the washing of feet? Too simple for a lot of people. Too simple and too humble. And to eat the bread and the wine, that's simple isn't it. The bread that Jesus took was the bread that was right there on the table. The wine that He poured was the wine that was right there on the table. And He said to His disciples, "Now wherever you go I want you to do what I've done tonight in washing one another's feet and I want you to eat this bread and drink this wine and remember me and do that until I come." "And if you do this," He says, "it will give you life." It's through this that I'm giving you my life." And my point is, friends, those were

all the ordinance He gave the church. Do you know of any others? Tell me, do you know of any others? That's it.

But in all ages it has been easy to multiply form and bury what God commanded under a great mass of human improvement. Assuming that the more our forms, and the greater our ritual, the richer is our worship. And my friends, it's a lie. It's a lie. Oh I pray that we shall appreciate the simplicity of the ordinances that Jesus has given us. And that we should never let the multiplication of activities hide from us for one moment, the *imminence* on which these ordinances stand. There're many things that we may do in church activity that may have their place, but they do not have the place of divine revelation. These ordinance of baptism and the Lord's Supper have been given us as Paul said, "I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you." Oh, let us appreciate *these* services. What do you say? [Audience: "Amen"] And if we do, as I say, we'll never let a massive other day hide from us the *supreme* importance of these divinely revealed and divinely commanded ordinances. We'll be present at every ordinance service to renew our vows and to receive the new light.

Now, in our meditations this afternoon I thought it would be very appropriate for us in this first service in this new chapel, if there might be to our minds by the Spirit of God, a *linking* of these ordinances with the sanctuary service. For in this chapel, thank the Lord, we have through a chain of providences, this beautiful miniature model before us from time-to-time as we meet here. The veil has been rent in twain of the earthly service but we are still studying what went on back there in order that we may understand what goes on above, is that right? And so this evening I would like to have us notice, in this ancient service some things that help us to appreciate this service this afternoon. And visa-versa, there are some things in the service this afternoon that will help us to appreciate this service back there.

You'll remember that in the court was the, not only the brazen alter, but the brazen laver. What was in that laver? Water was in that laver. What was that water for? For the priest to wash their hands and their feet before they went into the sanctuary. Now, I don't have to spend very much time suggesting to you what has already come to your minds as you think about that. That here we have something to think about in connection with the ordinance of feet washing, that right? You're familiar with the scripture there in John 13, that before Jesus led his disciples into the mysteries of the broken bread and the poured wine, He did what? He washed their feet. In the ancient sanctuary service the laver was part of the *preparatory* activity. And so is the washing of feet in this, it is a *preparatory* service. It is not a separate ordinance. It's just a part of the preparatory service in connect with the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. We never celebrate it apart from the Lord's Supper, do we? No. The purpose of the washing at the laver was to prepare for service in the sanctuary. And so without, as we enter into this service this afternoon, washing one another's feet, let's think of the priest at the laver, washing before they went into the sanctuary. And may I say on this, friends, it's a wonderful thing to wash before we go to supper, isn't it? To come to the Lord's table, His holy communion, knowing that we are thoroughly cleansed.

If we gather here in this house of worship this evening, to celebrate these mysteries, the Spirit of God will bring to our minds, perhaps things that have hindered our Christian walk since last we met and engaged in this service. If so, let us remember this (and don't forget it), those men that met with Jesus around that table in Jerusalem, where all of them unprepared for the Lord's supper when they entered the room. There wasn't a one that was ready, am I correct? Not a one. But when Jesus had washed their feet they were all clean, He said—except one. And Judas could have been clean, couldn't he? There was no lack of provision. So this afternoon, my dear friend, during this little period of meditation, then during the feet washing, let's be sure that every sin is confessed and then let us by faith accept the fact of cleansing. Will you do that? Don't hesitate about it. Jesus say's,

"If you know these things, happy are ye if ye do them"
John 13:17.

Well, what's the purpose of the feet washing? The same as the washing at the laver there, to get ready to go into the sanctuary. Let's wash and go in, what do you say friends? Let's wash and go in.

All right, now, what are we going to find when we go in? Well, we go into the veil there, into the Holy Place, and the first thing we find on the right hand side, on the north as the sanctuary was laid out, is a table. And what's on the table? Bread, bread. We're going to gather around the table here, presently, and what's going to be on it? Bread. And what did that bread represent? Jesus. And what does this bread represent? Jesus.

Oh, I'm so glad that in this dispensation it's not restricted to the priests. You know only the priest could eat that bread, back there, on the table. But you and I, every one of us, have been called to be members of a holy priesthood. Aren't you glad? And so we can all share in this bread—this bread for the priesthood—this living bread. You remember Jesus in the synagogue at Capernaum said,

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if a man eat of this bread he shall live forever..." John 6:51.

This bread is different from the bread you and I eat on our table from day-to-day. That bread keeps us alive for minutes, hours, days. But this bread, friends—the bread in the sanctuary on the table, the bread of the communion in this holy supper—*this* bread keeps us alive forever. The bread we eat at breakfast maintains our physical life. This bread, this spiritual bread, maintains our spiritual life. And *yet* it is physical bread that we're eating. Was that real bread on that table back then? Oh yes. It represented Jesus. And this is real bread we're going to eat this afternoon and in and through this bread, Jesus is going to give to you and me His own life. Aren't you glad for that, friends? I need it, I need it.

You know when you're out working hard during the week and you hadn't had something to eat for several hours, you come in either at dinnertime or suppertime to get something. Don't you look forward to that building up of your strength as a result of taking on some nourishment? And so dear friends, been awhile since you and I have partaken of this holy bread. It may be we feel a little weak this afternoon but I tell you: the fact that we're weak shouldn't keep us from coming to the table. The weaker we are, the more we need some food. What do you say? Don't forget it—that our worthiness is in Jesus. We wash at the fountain and then we come in.

All right, let's go now into the second room. And there we see just one article of furniture—the ark. And we know what's inside. The law is in there written on the tables of stone. But I see a little golden pot. And what's in that? The manna. That's bread too—bread from heaven. And so today, friends, as we eat this bread, remember we're eating bread from heaven. The bread of God is Jesus who came down from heaven to give life to the world. Is that right? All right. Now let's go to 1 Corinthians the 11th chapter and read the words that Paul said he got from Jesus.

"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread: And when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me." 1 Corinthians 11: 23-24.

What did Jesus say this bread is? His body. Let's accept it as such. Now as you know, there's one great church that says that the priest, by pronouncing certain words, actually changes that bread *into* the literal body and blood of Christ. We don't believe that. Jesus was using symbolic language, of course, *but* let's not get so far in the other direction that we miss what Christ is saying. He's telling us, friends, that there's something in this for *us*. The partaking of His own nature. As when I eat bread, the bread becomes a part of me. So when I enter into this service, Jesus, through this bread, becomes a part of me. Oh, I wanted to keep on until all of Him has become me. In other words, that His nature is fully communicated to me, fully lived out in me. Don't you want that friends? In this service today is another *link* in that wonderful chain; it's another *step* in that wonderful journey, another *experience* in this series of experiences.

I wonder if there's anybody here this afternoon for whom this will be your first communion service. Could I see your hand, is there anybody like that? Yes, Billy, we're so glad to welcome you as one of God's children to the table of the Lord. Glad Billy's here to celebrate with us. Now if I were to ask in the other direction, doubtless there are those here who have had 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70 years of receiving these ordinances. But I want to tell you something, friends: when we gather around our daily tables to eat, the children are there and the old folks are there and all in-between; this is all something we share in the eating, isn't that right? The old folks need it to keep their strength going and they can't say, "Well, I used to eat 50 years ago but I don't eat anymore." We *all* keep eating as long as we keep living, don't we? Yes. And so as we enter the church

through baptism, as we're born again through water and the Spirit, as we become members of the church of Christ, we start eating. And we're never to cease as long as we're in this world. As the priest ate from time-to-time of that sacred bread, so we come to the table of the Lord today to eat.

Now as we separate for the preparatory service, the brethren will be in this side room, the sisters here. It's suggested by the deacons that when we come back for the service of the supper, that we'll sit in alternate seats in order to make it easy for the deacons to serve. I don't know brethren, whether you're going to have that many seats. Um, what about it brother Callahan? Look at this audience. [Brother Callahan in the background] What? Alright, well, then don't worry about that, because I can see after I made the announcement that there aren't that many seats and I rejoice, don't you? Why yes, I rejoice. Now next time when we have this service there'll be more and there'll be more seats, too. And that's fine. Oh, I'm so happy to see the family growing, aren't you?

And may I say again dear friends how thankful I am for everyone that's here this afternoon. You are very precious to the Lord. You who've come in from a distance, you've come from off the campus, remember you're just as much a part of this as the people here on the campus. We're all children of God. He's our Father, the church is our Mother and we're sharing together as the seed of the woman that keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. And one of His commandments is, "wash one another's feet," and another one is, "eat this bread and drink this cup until I come." Let's do what He says, what do you say?

And remember, if we'll do it and *trust* Him, it'll be just right. But may I, before I sit down, draw this little practical lesson. You all know that when we sit at the table, we're supposed to come with a relaxed spirit, a cheerful heart, and enjoy the food. Is that right? Yes. And if we have any difficulties we're not to bring them to the breakfast table, or the dinner table, or the supper table. Have we been told that? Yes. That applies here. We're told to get our mourning and weeping, our confessing and repentance all done before we come to this table. That's what the preparatory service is for. And don't say, "The trouble with me is I've got a *weeks* worth of work to do before I can come." Remember what I've said: those men that came into the upper room were *utterly* unprepared. But they got prepared as Jesus washed their feet. And if you and I would yield our hearts to him and then simply believe His word, we'll here Him say to us as He did to Peter, and John, and Matthew, and Thomas, you're all clean. Let's do it. Then when we come to the table, let's come with joyous hearts, with glad spirits, thanking Jesus for this wonderful gift of the bread and the wine representing His body. Shall we do that? Then we'll receive the blessing that He died to make possible.

We can separate now. [singing hymn "My Jesus, I love Thee" first stanza]

The place for the doctor to poke is where you hurt. The thing to give up is the thing that God put's His finger on that's been troubling you. If it's your temper, give Him that. If it's tobacco, give Him that. If it's swearing, give Him that. If it's some book, that was bothering me years ago, give Him that. Do you see what I mean? Don't wait for

me to put *my* finger on it; I don't even know what your problem is, probably. It may be nothing that I said a word about this morning. The Holy Spirit may be talking to you about something that I haven't the *remotest* idea is bothering you. I don't need to know. God knows and you know—that's plenty. That right? What are you going to do with it? In simple faith give it to God.

You know there are some things that are easier to give up than others because they're so tangible. Up home in my study I have a box that I call a trophy box. You'd be interested in seeing it. It has an old pipe in it, it has several packages of cigarettes, and it has a plug of tobacco with one chew gone out of it. That's right. Yes, sir. I got that from a man in a San Francisco hotel 38 years ago. Several years after I had that experience with him, I went out to the general conference in San Francisco as a delegate, and as I was sitting there and I looked up in the side row gallery and there I saw this man, Brother Strombach. And he saw me. And as the meeting was dismissed, he made a line for me and I made a line for him and he *threw* his big arms around me and I threw my arms around him. I still got his last plug of tobacco, one chew gone. Things like that are easy to give up. Oh you say they are hard, well they are in a way, but at least you know when they're separated from you and down there. You see what I mean? They're tangible.

Evil temper, it's a little bit different. [Elder Frazee laughs] That right? Yes, sir. Yes, you still have them pretty close, don't you? But listen, God is master of the situation. You can give that evil temper to God just like Strombach gave his tobacco to God.

Well, whatever your problem is, I want you to give it to God as we kneel here in prayer now. Now the other thing friend, when you give it to God believe He takes it. When you *give* it to God believe He takes it. Believe it, will you. Leave it with Him.

Some of you've heard me tell about my father giving up his tobacco. Took his plug of tobacco and *throw* it out in the cornfield as far as he could. And sometimes in the afternoon mother would see him out there walking in the cornfield, just looking. What was he looking for? That tobacco. Can you get it back, friends? Yes, you can get it back. God isn't going to hide it so you can never find it whether it's the tobacco or the temper.

Anytime you wanna' get mad and tell somebody off, you'll find your temper's pretty close by. You can use it, if that's what you want. But if you don't want the tobacco and don't want the temper, the thing is to get down and cry to God. And God that helped you to give it to Him in here this morning will help you to control it whether it's the craving for tobacco or the desire to lose your temper or desire to read some book you know isn't good for you or anything else.

Cry to God! Do you see what I mean?

“The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears, And

delivers them out of all their troubles” Psalms 34:17

So two things this morning: we're giving up and we're believing that He can do it. We're surrendering all and particularly the *thing* that He's talked to us about. Is that it? You're laying it right down. And if it is anything tangible, friends, that you can deal with in a tangible way, deal with it very literally. If it's a book that you know God doesn't want you to read, burn it up. Don't have it around. If it's tobacco, bury it or burn it up, something, get rid of it. By an *act* of your will show that you've burned your bridges behind you, see what I mean? And if it's something intangible, like your temper, just give it to God as fully... and as I say when the temptation comes back, cry to God.

[Question from audience member.]

Anybody else have something you want to say or question before we pray? All right, now listen; we're going to pray. Anyone needs to go, you go. I'd rather stay here than eat a dozen dinners. And I want to hear from anyone that wants to stay and bear your testimony. As I see you're perfectly free to go as soon as we've had prayer. And any of you that would like to stay we're going to have a little witness meeting and whether it's one or 40 people who want to talk there will be a chance for you to get up, in a few words, tell what God has done for you here this morning. And my advice is, unless you really need to go, stay, because the richest blessing of the whole day may be right now. All right, let's pray.

Jack, pray, will you?

Our dear kind heavenly Father, it is so good to be here this morning. We're so thankful that we can be convicted by the Holy Spirit in [inaudible]. We're so thankful that we can see ourselves for what we really are. Father, we ask that You'll remove this thing that is standing between us and Thee, so we can have a closer experience with Thee, Father. We know this morning as we live in an hour, the last hours of earth's history, we want to become serious and we want to confess it to thee, Father, that Thou might give us the finishing work. And help each one here ...[inaudible]... struggling with their problems ...[inaudible]... help them to exercise their faith, step forward, and in conjunction with that faith, we ask Thee now cleanse us, help us to have a deeper experience and help us all to be drawn closer to thee. ...[inaudible]... In Jesus name and for His sake, Amen.

[Elder Frazee is praying now.] Dear Father we unite in these requests. Just now we see Thy dear face as Thou dost bend over us in love. Just now we give ourselves to Thee. We give Thee the book. We give Thee the tobacco. We give Thee the evil temper. We give Thee the gossiping tongue. We give Thee *everything* that Thou has spoken to our hearts personally about this morning. Just now we lay it all down at Thy pierced feet. Now Lord we believe You've accepted it. We believe You're going to help us from now on. We're not going back to those evil tempers. We're not going back to the tobacco. We're not going back to the gossip and the anger and all the other things. We're not trusting in ourselves, we're trusting in Thy holy word. Like that light bulb up

there, we'd quite shining in a second if we lost our connection. But like that light bulb, we're going to keep on shining, tied in with Thee. And we thank Thee, in Jesus name, Amen.

Be seated and anyone that would like to speak, you lead right off. Let's not lose a second of this precious time. Now remember, friends, we're here in this little meeting, *not* to talk about an experience we had 40 years ago, or even four days ago. The purpose of this meeting is just one thing: if God has done something for you in the last hour, in this meeting, stand up and say so to the glory of His name.

[Testimony service followed.]

Look here, all there is to this thing is the past, the present, and the future. You can't get outside of that. The past: Jesus completely covers with His blood. Accepts us just as if we'd never sinned the moment we surrender to Him. Is that right? Ok, that takes care of the past. The future: He guarantees to get us ready and take us into heaven. He *guarantee's* that. That takes care of all the future; all that's left is the present. What's that? That's right now. And what does He do about that? With the past all covered by His precious life, and the future all covered with His promise, He says, "Now you make the effort to do what I tell you and I'll help you and together we'll walk the road. And so I keep seeking to do it. But suppose I *fall*? Ok, what'd you do when you were a baby and fell? Get up and go on. Daddy and mother, they didn't kick you out. They didn't say, "Well we wouldn't have a child around this house that couldn't walk." Did they? No, no, no. Why they were right there and the more we fell the more interested they were, right? *Jesus* is where I am. He's right where my problem is and I don't have to worry. My tension isn't going to keep me from falling; His *grace* is going to keep me from falling. And if I fall, I'll arise and go on. So the past is taken care of, the present, the future. What other dimension can you get, friends? That's the whole thing.

[Testimony service continued.]

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