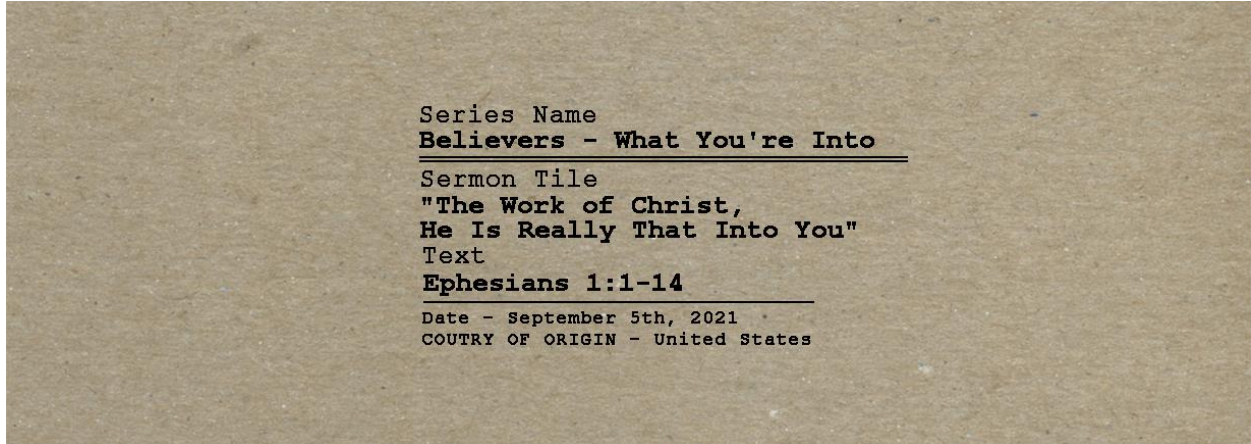


The Work of Christ, He Is Really That Into You



Sermon PowerPoint is available [HERE](#).

Video of Sermon is avl here: <https://youtu.be/QRhUXBrllFc>

[Ephesians 1:1-14](#)

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,

To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful^a in Christ Jesus:

² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Spiritual Blessings in Christ

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵ he predestined us^b for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸ which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹ making known^c to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

¹¹ In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ¹² so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also,

when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee^d of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it,^e to the praise of his glory.

Sermon Transcription:

Pastor Thom Rittichier

So we've arrived at Labor Day weekend. Labor Day has an interesting history, at least according to history.com. It says that Labor Day this year 2021 actually occurs on September 6, which will be tomorrow, Monday. And Labor Day historically pays tribute to the contributions and the achievements of workers. It was traditionally observed on the first Monday in September, and was created in the 19th century, 1894, to recognize that contribution of labor, of work. This morning, we are going to celebrate Labor Day by commemorating the work of Christ. That will be involving the observance of the Lord's Table, because in commemorating that work, that's what Jesus initiated, the Lord's Table. He gave it to us as a commemoration of his work. Over and over, Matthew chapter 27, Mark chapter 14, Luke 22, he presents this saying, Do this to remember me, do it to commemorate me. And we're going to kind of change this a little bit this morning. And I need to say that this is outside of my comfort zone, okay? Because I am going to be asking you to participate in this. And we're going to be talking about the Lord's Table, concerning what the scripture has talked to us about and how it relates to our life today. We're going to be talking about it that way.

So as we arrived at Labor Day weekend, I'm going to ask you to turn with me in your Bible to the book of Hebrews chapter nine and you're going to need this sheet that's been handed out to you. So I want you to have that readily available. Because we are going to be using that this morning as we take a look at this. As you're turning over to Hebrews chapter nine, we're going to be getting a picture of how God talks to us about the work of Christ. As you're turning there, I'd like to bring up this picture. This picture was recently sent to me of a display. And there's a video titled, "God is Not Mad at You". And I can say that if you're a believer in Christ, that is indeed true. If you're not a believer in Christ, then the Bible says that the wrath of God, the anger of God, the "Mad" of God, is being expressed at those who push down, suppress the truth in choosing what is not right. That's the book of Romans chapter one. But anyway, that video was interestingly placed next to this video in that display, "He's Just Not That Into You". And those two titles kind of coming together is an interesting note.

Well, this morning, as we look into what we do, commemorating the Lord's work, I want you to know that Christ work shows God is that into you, he genuinely is that into you, as he talks about it in the work of Christ. So if you're with me at Hebrews chapter nine, I want to begin by giving us the picture of Christ work. And God took a long, long, long time, years and years, to set up this picture that he's going to present to us here, on the work of Christ, that we're commemorating on this Labor Day, God took years and years and years to set this up. He gave detailed description to his old testament people, the Israelites, so that this picture of God's work of Christ would be clearly grasped. He also not only gave a detailed description, he also set up a very elaborate, very protocol, stringent, sacrificial system in the Old Testament for the worship of Him that was

designed particularly to present this picture of Christ's work, that we see here in Hebrews chapter nine.

So with that kind of a background, I want you to join me in Hebrews, chapter nine. And we're going to begin at verse 11. God is talking here about the covenant, the Old Covenant, the old agreement between people and him. It was a covenant that was given concerning laws and regulations. And is the background picture for what we look at, in this work of Christ, beginning with me at verse eleven, "But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, then through the greater and more perfect tent". He's talking here about the Tent of Meeting between God and man which was known as the tabernacle. It was set up by very detailed design. And that's because the tabernacle was to be a shadowy representation, a silhouette on Earth, of what was actually the case about the places of God in heaven, where he manifests himself, where he shows himself. So when Christ appeared on the scene, as a high priest of the good things to come, then through the greater and the more perfect tent, that is he says, "(not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the holy places". This tabernacle had holy places where only certain people will go, the holiest of all was called the Holy of Holies. It was the Holy of Holies where God was to meet with man, manifesting his presence, that was the holiest of holies. "He, Christ, entered once for all into the holy places, not by the means of the blood of goats and calves but by the means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of heifer, sanctify for the perfecting of the flesh", which it was used for that under the old covenant, "how much more with the blood of Christ, through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God." That's the picture, he goes on. "Therefore he is the mediator", the go between, "of a new covenant, so that those who are called by God may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant, the Old Covenant. For where a will involved, the death of the one who made it must be established." This is the picture of the work of Christ. The tabernacle was a shadowy figure, a silhouette that wasn't real good of the tabernacle in heaven, where there is the holiest of holies, the place where Christ entered through his blood, offering his life.

Now we're going to pick up a little bit more on this because it's described a bit fuller, slide down, if you would, starting in verse number 24. He says this as he gives more details of the old compared to the new, "For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are a copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy place every year with blood not his own, for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, that is the work of Christ. And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once, to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him." Now I want you to notice that in this work of Christ, there is a past accomplishment. That's highlighted there, in verse 26 and again in verse 28. Notice, "he

has appeared once", verse 26, "for all at the end of the ages to put away sins by the sacrifice of himself". That's a past accomplishment. He's put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. Notice again in verse 28, "so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many". It is a done deal in that accomplished sacrifice. He bore our own sin on his body on the tree. That's done. Sin is paid. But there is a future to this. He goes on in verse 28. Christ "will appear a second time, not to deal with sin". No, that's done. He's not going to take up the sin issue again. That's done. He is appearing "a second time not to deal with sin but to rescue those who are eagerly waiting for him". There's the picture. The picture has a present application, redemption is accomplished. And it's also applied to our life.

Going on now, in Hebrews chapter 10, he describes this shadowy picture of what was before, and that this really wasn't what God wanted. He actually wanted Christ. I'm going to start at verse 12, where he takes up this, "But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sin, he sat down at the right hand of God", where he is presently, "waiting for that time until his enemies shall be made a footstool for his feet. For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified", those who are going God's way. "And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying", quoting the Old Testament on the New Covenant, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declare the Lord: I will put my laws on their hearts, and write them on their minds, then he adds, I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more", no more does God bring them to mind. "Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin", nothing can be done.

Now, I'm going to ask you to take out the sheet that I've given to you. Because at the bottom of this sheet, is the application of redemption to our lives. Here is how God intends for it to be applied. Having taken all the time over years and years to paint the picture, which we just summarized from the book of Hebrews, here is how he wants it to be applied. And we're going to do this in a responsive reading fashion. I'm going to read the italicized print. You read the unitalicized. I'm going to start with the italicized, you read the unitalicized. Hebrews 10:19-25, (pastor starts responsive reading) "Therefore brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy place, the holiest of holies, by the blood of Jesus," (Congregation responds) "by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, (pastor reads) "and since we have a great high priest over the house of God", (congregation responds) "let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water". (pastor reads) "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful". (congregation responds) "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and to good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near". (end of responsive reading) That Day is the day that Christ awaits, the day when he appears the second time to rescue those who eagerly awaits for him. The day when his enemies are placed as a footstool under his feet. And that day is approaching. It is approaching and the application of this redemption is exactly what he says here. "Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and to good works, not neglecting to meet together...but encouraging one another."

As we observe the Lord's Table, which commemorates that work of Christ by his blood into the true tabernacle in heaven, I'm going to be asking you to share. I'm going to be asking you to participate concerning what this has involved in your life. Now, what this becomes, is what you share. Okay? So I just wanted to give you an idea of what's going to happen here, having thought about what was accomplished. I'd like you now to turn over to Ephesians chapter one, the next section of the Ephesians Series: Believers/What You're Into. And as believers, this is what we're into. The first thing we see is his work accomplished, which is to be commemorated. There is where we're going to observe the Lord's Table, as we go through this. His work accomplished, that we enter into and that we commemorate this morning. Then we're going to talk about how his work holds a future to be anticipated. And he talks to us here about the anticipation of this future. And then we're going to talk about his work which provides a present to be experienced by us, as God talks about it here. So that's kind of what we're going to do. But I want you to know, I am not going to preach...well, not much. I am not going to preach, we're going to look at the passage and see how it leads us to a question that I want us to talk about, to share, if you would.

So we're going to begin with the first one. His work accomplished what is to be commemorated. Ephesians 1:7, "In him", Paul says by inspiration of God, "we have redemption through his blood,". This redemption actually means to set loose and away through a price that gets paid. The history behind this use of the word by Paul was that there was slavery during those times. And in this slavery, a person could pay a price to buy a slave out of slavery and set them free and let them go on their way. That was the use of redemption. That somebody pays a price to free and to let go away. That's what we have, through his blood. Through his blood, we're set free from slavery to sin, so that we can go away and be free of it. We have redemption through his blood, which he further describes here as the forgiveness, the release of our trespasses, our offenses, our sins. So, that's how Paul describes this. In Him, that's the first words, in Christ, we have redemption, "according to the riches of his grace", verse 8, "which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight". God had wisdom and he had forethought and insight as to what it would accomplish.

Now, here's the question. This is a question for us around The Lord's Table. The question is, and this is what I would like you to think about, how has this that God has done through the work of Christ, how has this helped you handle sin in your life? That's what I'd like us to kind of think about, to share about, as we're going to transition into the Lord's Table. Now, I'm talking about sin, not only your sin, in your life, which has to be handled, but I'm talking about the sin of other people too. Are you ever sinned against? Yeah. As a matter of fact, we're kind of better able to remember how we're sinned against than how we sin. But we have to handle both. We have to handle our own sin and being sinned against. This is how God handled being sinned against in the work of Christ. How has that helped you handle sin in your own life, your own sin? How has it helped you handle the sin of others towards you? How has that helped you handle that? Or can I even go this far, in handling the sin of this world that we live in? You know, there's a lot of sin, and it's causing a lot of problems. Anybody ever heard of the critical race theory? Can I tell you that that is grounded in sin? The theory, the response to the theory, the opposing of this theory, it is sin in the way people treat people that is all

around that thing called the critical race theory. Has anybody ever heard about right wing or left wing politics? And is there any sin in there? On which side is the sin? Is it on the left? Is it on the right? How do you handle that? How do you handle sin? How has this, the work of Christ, help you handle sin in your life, your own sin, the sin of others towards you, the sin present of the world in which we live? So I'm going to give you a chance to think about that, then we're going to share.

Right now though, I'm going to ask our deacon and our elder to come up, and they're going to distribute the Lord's Table, as you think about that. And as it's being distributed, I'm going to read for you the passage in which the Apostle Paul talks about the Lord's Table and how we approach it. I'm going to ask our elder to lead us in prayer, that the Lord would help us to encourage one another, to stir each other on to love and good works by what we share. (Elder prays) Lord, we are thankful that we can come here this morning and become humbled. That we can see Jesus on the cross and his blood shed for us. We pray you will help us respond to how we would deal with our own sin in light of Jesus sacrifice for us, and also how we deal with other people. Help us, Lord, as we see other people, that we would see them as we are, as sinners that need your grace and your mercy. We thank you for this privilege we have to come to your table, to worship and honor you. Thank you for grace. In Jesus name, Amen.

(Elder and deacon distribute sacraments as pastor reads) 1 Corinthians 11:23-32 , "For I received from the Lord that which I also deliver to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night in which he was betrayed took bread. And when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me. In the same way, after the supper, he took the cup, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, and then let him eat the bread and drink the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many of you are weak and ill and some have died. But if we judge ourselves truly we shall not be judged for when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined, so that we may not be condemned along with the world." Thank you, gentlemen.

So, opportunity for us to share. First of all, in dealing with our own sin. At the Lord's Table, if we come to it in an unworthy manner, we come to it in a way that we're not discerning. When we're humbled, we see what our sin cost God and that he handled it. And now we are to handle sin, our own sin, in a worthy manner, discerning the body and blood of Christ, the appreciation of what he's done in bearing on his own body our sins on the tree. Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness, he shed his blood to forgive us. Now, how do we handle our sin? Or maybe how we should handle our sin? Anyone want to share? (Congregant shares) The fact that I am redeemed, set free. I am also empowered by the Holy Spirit. So this sacrifice not only set me free, but gave me the precious gift of strength through Christ. Because on my own, I would revel in my sin. I would choose to enjoy it. But because of those times when I do sin, the Holy Spirit quickly chastens me and brings me back to the fact that I'm no longer bound, but I am

free. So that is how his sacrifice has empowered me through the power of the Holy Spirit, not of my own but through the redemption which is precious to me.

(Pastor speaking) Amen. Good. Should we be shocked at sin? It's gonna happen. So should we be shocked at sin? I guess that's the first thing that has helped me handle sin is that as a believer, there's going to be sin. Matter of fact, when we talk to folks about getting married, we say this when two sinners say I do. Because every time we add a person you add sin. So we're not to be shocked, but willing to own sin. I hate that. I hate that, especially when it's one of my kids who are nailing me. I mean, it's my job as parent to correct them but when they nail me on a sin I need to own! And you know, they have consistently done that, and have not given up. And especially when my wife talks to me about it. You know, I'm the head of the home here. When she talks to me about and it helps me to handle that, because lo and behold, I find my own pride is part of that sin. It's helped me to look at my own sin realistically. Some days, some days, right? It's hard handling your sin.

(congregant shares) For me, remembering what Christ did, and remembering what it cost Christ to pay for my sin, helps me not to minimize my sin. It helps me to hate it like God hates it. When I'm in the right frame of mind to acknowledge it. Then it helps me to hate it. And to work to not sin again. He has forgiven it. Yes, praise God for that. But there still is work to be done on my end. (Pastor speaks) Amen. Amen. Handling your sin. Good. I don't want to hurry off this one. I want us to think about handling our sin here.

(congregant shares) 1 John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sin. He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." And when I talk to guys at the prison, I tried to point out to them that there are two responsibilities there, the first responsibility is ours: confessing our sin. We confess it not to some man but we confess it to the Lord. And then in the Greek you could say when or since we confess our sin, then the other responsibility belongs to the Lord Jesus: He cleanses us from all sin. And that's his job. I think when we confess it means to forsake and turn away from it. He makes our hearts right, then we can go on and in service, loving the Lord and serving the Lord. Sin is like an anchor tied around your neck. If we don't get rid of it, it's gonna drown us. That's a very good verse to memorize and remember. (Pastor speaks) Amen. It's a great picture. Confess, agree, say the same thing God does about it. And for sake it, it's helpful.

(Congregant shares) First of all, I think it helped me see it, this thing of sin, because I like to think that I have no sin. And the more that I grow in relationship to Christ, and what he's done, the more I realize, every time I turn around, I'm sinning. And then all the more, his work is bigger in my eyes. So seeing it, first of all, I think is what it is. And then the realization that this thing that I can easily justify away in my mind is why Christ died. So it's a big deal, bigger than I want it to be.

(Congregant shares) We are suppose to mortify our sin, we're supposed to kill it. And in that process many times I see my sin, and I get discouraged. And I get paralyzed, and I don't want to do anything. I know that it's right that I consider it and repent but I can't

be paralyzed by it. Romans speaks about reckoning ourselves dead to sin, so I'm dead to that, but alive to God. I'm active and I'm repenting. And I'm realizing too, that even at the same time, that I'm a simple person, Christ has forgiven me and taken away my sin, he has given me perfect righteousness. And it gives me an ability to walk in a sanctified way and become more like him.

(Pastor speaks) Amen. Good. Let's introduce the sin of others against you. The sin in our world, when we are tempted to think, I hate that position of the right, or I hate the position of the left! How does this help us handle that? Does anyone ever get affected by any of that stuff that happens politically?

(Congregant shares) With all this stuff that's happening politically and other people's attitudes toward me sometimes, my real self that I was born with, wants to fight and make just as much noise as they do. It's taken me a long time to learn different, and what Christ did for me is he showed me how to act differently to it instead of reacting to the act. And it really does help me rein in and try much harder to show how he is. It's gonna be another lifetime of learning for me to get it down. But yeah, it's made a big difference on how I handle those things. And, to see where they're coming from also in their actions.

(Pastor speaks) Good. Very good. It helps us to deal gently. You know, we have a great high priest, who is not untouched by the feelings of our infirmities, because he was tempted in all things, all things like we are. But because of that, he is able to deal gently, gently. But sometimes I wrongly believe, that the louder I get the clearer this is going to be, the point that I'm making. But no, gently.

(Congregant shares) I think for me, the whole state of the world we live in, we live in a world of hate. One of the things that really has affected me positively I think about this is, whenever I get so like, mad and upset that somebody has a different opinion than me, it's like, well, Jesus has forgiven me for the full amount. You know, whenever somebody does something bad to me, it's like, Man, I've done so much worse to Jesus, and he forgives me, consistently over and over and over and over again, right? So who am I to be holding a grudge against somebody just because they have a different opinion than me? And they're being rather aggressive about sharing that different opinion than me. It's like, Well, okay.

(Congregant shares) It's really interesting, as Jesus was going to the cross and experiencing the horrendous effects of crucifixion. And he of all people have the right to call down God's fury on mankind. And his reaction was compassion and pity on the people who were not turning to him, on the people that were railing against him and put him on this cross. And he said, Father, forgive them. And my heart is so often, Father, teach them a lesson and annihilate them. And, you know, show them how wrong wrong wrong they are. And that was not Jesus's attitude, because that was all of us. At that point in time, we would have been right there in the crowd, shouting to crucify him. And his heart of compassion goes out to people who are against him. And when I get very frustrated and angered by politics, and all of that garbage, I need to, I try to consciously instead of fighting against, which is what I really want to do. I try to consciously say, you

know, God, I'm going to leave this in your hands. And please enlighten them. And I can make some little comment, but I'm not going to get up on my soapbox, which is where I really want to be. Because that's not going to change anything. God can change hearts, I can't. And that's part of what Christ did on the cross was that heart of compassion, in extreme duress, human, his heart was still looking towards us.

(Pastor speaks) That's a good observation. You know, this morning, when I got up and was getting around, I looked into the mirror, and my mind clicked over to two people who are currently my enemies. And I went through all the things that I would say to them, like, When are you going to grow up and get mature and no longer handle this like a teenager? And I was just clicking that off as I looked in the mirror. And suddenly, I began to think of what I'm talking about this morning. How you handle sin towards you.

(Congregant shares) I thought first, that God did not so HATE the world, that he sent Christ into it. He so LOVED the world. And I love the book of Ephesians. But somewhere along the way, in my youth, I developed this tone when I was reading it, just an internal tone. I don't know whether it was taught or not, how I picked it up. But there was this almost edge when I would read the words of Jesus, there was an edge when I would read Paul's epistles. And I have been so struck lately by how slow the Lord is, he is so slow, unless he doesn't want. But in general, he's slow to anger. He is slow to deal out judgment. He is. It is his loving kindness that brings us to repentance. And so when I think personally, not necessarily politically, or at the wider culture, but personally, when the sins of others against me or my sins against others even, how slow the Lord is. And that I am just this tiny thing, I have only two eyes to see what's in front of me. I can gather other people's perspectives, but only one at a time. And it's only from books or videos or the people in front of me. It's so small, even if I worked my whole life to be able to see, it would still be so small. And yet he sees everything from beginning to end. He sees everyone's hearts, he knows the trace of my life, and I don't have to fight against people. Vengeance is mine, says the Lord, I will repay. And that verse has given me so much comfort because I don't want his vengeance on anyone. Even those who have harmed me the most. I don't. I don't want his vengeance for them. I want their redemption. I want the cleansing of their sins. I want them to come into the kingdom of God not just them in heaven but heaven in them. That's what I want for them. So when I read these verses and I think of sin, I think about, about other sin, about my own sin, I think of how slow and patient the Lord is. What a bad master I am. But I have a new master. I don't have to beat myself up and I don't have to beat anyone else up. He will take care of it.

(Congregant shares) A Scripture that goes along with what's being said. It's 1 Peter 2:21-24, "For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return, when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness By his wounds, you have been healed.

(Pastor speaks) Amen. Amen. So on the night in which he was betrayed, he took the bread. And he said, This is my body, which is broken, for you. Take and eat. In the same manner, after the supper, he took the cup. And he said, This cup is the new covenant, in my blood. It is shed for many, that sin may be forgiven. He said all that with the picture of where he was about to enter. The picture of his own blood entering the holiest of holies in heaven. This is the new covenant in my blood. It is shed for you, for many, that sin may be forgiven. Do this to remember me. For as often as you eat this bread, and you drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Father, we give things to you for what is proclaimed, for it has been proclaimed by your people to each other to stimulate, to love and to good works, to hear how others look at, face, deal, address hope, apply scripture, think deep in their heart, about the love of God in Christ. And that in him we have redemption, the forgiveness of our sins, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished on us, in Christ Jesus. In His name we pray, Amen.

I am going to stop here because I think that we have done much to stimulate to love and to good works.