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Luke 22:7-20

If you were to go to Ground Zero in New York where the World Trade Center Towers once stood you would find a memorial. In the exact place where the towers once stood there are two huge square pools. If you see an aerial shot of them you can see, "that's where the towers were." The pools themselves are way down below the ground and two enormous waterfalls feed into the pools. It's really quite an amazing piece of architecture. Around the rim of the pools are engraved the names of every single person who died in those tragedies including the first responders who gave their lives trying to rescue as many people as they could. That memorial is there so that we remember and so that we never forget the sacrifice that those people made.

In Washington there is a similar memorial. It's the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. This also is an impressive piece of architecture. It looks like they cut into the ground to make a long black wall and on that long black wall are engraved the names of all the people who died in the Vietnam War. That memorial is there so that we would remember and not forget the sacrifices those people made.

Tonight Jesus gives us the Lord's Supper and he says, "Do this in remembrance of me." Jesus set up a memorial. Jesus' memorial was not a piece of architecture, it was a meal. And the purpose of this meal is so that we would remember Jesus and the sacrifice that he made.

But the thing about memorials is that they are always set up AFTER the event has taken place. No one sets up a memorial the day before a tragic event occurs. And why not? Because no one knows that the tragic event is going to happen. If they did know, they would try to do something to stop it! No one sets up a memorial the day BEFORE a tragic event occurs. Except Jesus. Jesus sets up the memorial the day before. Why? Jesus could have just as easily instituted the Lord's Supper after he rose from the dead. He could have said, "I've risen from the dead and now I want you to celebrate this meal in remembrance of me." If you're Jesus why set up the memorial before the event even occurs? Jesus did it to show everyone that he knew it was going to happen. Jesus knew what was going to happen to him the next day. Nothing took Jesus by surprise. Not even Judas betraying him took Jesus by surprise. In the verse right after our text tonight Jesus says, "**The hand that is going to betray me is with mine on the table.**" None of this takes Jesus by surprise.

But you gotta ask if he knew it was going to happen then why didn't he get out of town? If I knew that I was going to die in Burlington tomorrow, you had better believe that I would be heading to Milwaukee tonight! But with the Lord's Supper Jesus doesn't just say that he knows he's going to die. He also interprets the meaning of his death.

Around this time of year you usually see magazines in the grocery store, a special edition of TIME magazine and it's all about Jesus and usually it has a section in there on the death of Jesus and they always ask, "Why did Jesus die? What possible meaning might his death have?" And I'm not mocking them for asking the question. That is exactly the right question. And who better to explain the meaning of Jesus' death than Jesus himself? On the night before he died Jesus explained the meaning of his death. It says that "**Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it and gave it to his disciples saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, gave thanks and gave it to them saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood which is poured out for you."** (Luke 22:19-20).

Did you hear Jesus interpret the meaning of his death? He says, "This is my body, *given for you.*" He says my blood was *poured out for you.* He interprets his death sacrificially. "Blood poured out" was sacrificial language. In the Old Testament the priests would pour out the blood on the side of the altar. I was just listening to a sermon on Leviticus and Leviticus is a book in the Old Testament and the big point of Leviticus is that God is so holy that to have any relationship

with him at all you need to be constantly sacrificing. And as I was listening to this sermon I just kept picturing the cross as an altar and at the end it's just ash heap and it's smoldering and the smoke is going up to God.

Jesus says that that his sacrifice enacts the new covenant. "This is the new covenant in my blood." "Covenant" is a word for a special relationship between two people. So the sacrifice of Jesus gives you a special relationship with God.

God makes lots of different covenants in the Bible and sometimes there's a visible thing connected with the covenant to remind you of that special relationship. For example, after the flood, God made a covenant with Noah. He said I will never destroy the earth again with the flood and God said, "I am putting the rainbow in the sky" and in Genesis God actually says, "When I see the rainbow, I will remember my covenant with you."

Jesus gave us the Lord's Supper so that we would remember him and what he did for us. The Lord's Supper is there to remind us about Jesus because we are prone to forget. I'm pretty convinced that every single sin we commit boils down to this: we are looking for our satisfaction in something besides Jesus. That's why materialism is sinful, because you are looking for your ultimate satisfaction in something besides Jesus. That's when we need the Lord's Supper to remind us that whatever satisfaction we think we can get from materialism or success, we already have better satisfaction in Jesus. We spend our lives wearing ourselves out because we are working so hard for satisfaction outside of Jesus. We think that if we have the perfect family or the perfect house or the perfect grades that we will finally have satisfaction and we *forget* that we already have Jesus. That's why we need the memorial that he set up: to remind us that we already have Jesus.

And you ask me, Pastor Waldschmidt where is that in the Bible that I'll find perfect satisfaction in Jesus? It's in verses 16 and 18. Jesus says, **"For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God."** **"For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."** A lot of times we picture heaven as a banquet, a rich feast. And every time we take the Lord's Supper it's a reminder of that banquet that is coming for us in heaven. One of the prayers in one of our services for after communion says, "We thank you Lord for the foretaste of the heavenly banquet that you have given us to eat and to drink in this sacrament." The Lord's Supper is a foretaste of the heavenly banquet. It reminds us that we have a banquet coming in heaven. And I promise you that when you are across the table from him in the kingdom of God, the furthest thing from your mind will be whatever you thought would give you worth in this life. You'll have full satisfaction in Jesus.

I'll end tonight with a quotation from Martin Luther. Luther noticed that Jesus said, given FOR YOU, and Luther said, "Ponder, then, and include yourself personally in the FOR YOU." When you take the Lord's Supper tonight and the minister says, "given for you," know that Christ really did all this "for you." Remember that. Amen.