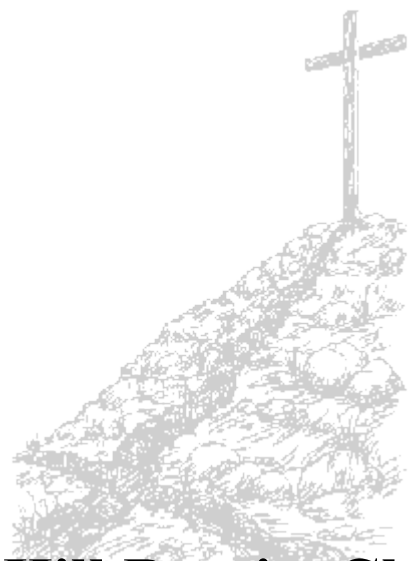


What A Friend We Have In Jesus

Matthew 26:26-32



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Focal Text (Read Responsively) (Matthew 26:26-32 KJV) "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. {27} **And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; {28} For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. {29} But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. {30} And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. {31} Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. {32} But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee."**

1. Am I Broken And In Love With The One Who Was Broken For Me?

Power Question Do I realize that the most *important friendship* I will ever have will be the friendship I have with the Lord Jesus Christ?

Where is your most important allegiance? Who is your greatest *friend*? In this life we have a tendency to focus on things that the Bible calls *temporary* or *passing*. Because everything we see with our eyes is in this realm, we often make the things of this life *greater* than the things of the next life.

This is the human condition.

Long ago a king named Adam stood in paradise and listened to a snake he shouldn't have listened to. God put man in a beautiful *paradise* and gave him everything in that paradise except one thing, one tree with one certain kind of fruit. King Adam took his attention from God's command that day, and heard the devil's direction instead. On that day the King became a Thief, stealing that which did not belong to him - and in so doing he lost his kingdom. A thief cannot remain in paradise.

Many years later the King of Kings left paradise and came and lived among us. This King owned everything and everyone. This King had the right to call every elect angel to His defense. This King could have destroyed this old earth and everything in it. Instead of doing that, this King allowed His Body to be broken for us.

Focal Text (Matthew 26:26 KJV) "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. "

Illustration In ancient times *costly perfume* was often placed in an *expensive* jar, then the jar was sealed. Small jars, much like the one that was poured on Christ's head by the weeping woman¹, cost a great deal of money. The

1 (Mark 14:3-5 KJV) "And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head. {4} And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made? {5} For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her."

sellers of such perfumes wanted, I suppose, you to get home with your purchase before you opened it. You had to *break the seal* to get to the perfume inside.

Our Lord Jesus allowed His Body to be broken for us. Because the King of Kings gave up what was rightfully His - His own life - We who believe in Him gain eternal life. Whereas King Adam turned thief, causing us to lose paradise, King Jesus was broken for us so we could gain paradise.

The most important relationship you will ever have in this life is the relationship you have with Jesus Christ. Too many people who profess Jesus Christ as Savior believe that their faith only matters *at the point of salvation* - but the Lord's Table teaches us that salvation doesn't just pertain to the future. If you are saved your salvation *must* extend not just into some time later in eternity. Your salvation *must effect everything you do*. Your salvation *must effect your life now*. Your salvation should, just like the *broken alabaster box did*, bring a fragrance all around you, making your life a blessing for everyone who comes in contact with you.

The broken Body of Christ did not just change your life in some future time - that surrendered Love should show you that Jesus wants you as His friend *in the here and now*.

The most important friendship you will ever have - I say again - is the living friendship that you have with Jesus Christ.

Illustration In a 1978 sermon Pastor John MacArthur

made a statement that is absolutely true. He said, and I paraphrase him, "**The tree of happiness will never grow in cursed earth**". Think about it! That is a *profound* statement. "**The tree of happiness will never grow in cursed earth**". Some of you are trying to find happiness in *earthly relationships apart from Christ*. But an earthly relationship apart from Christ is a relationship that is planted in *cursed earth*. Remember what I said before about King Adam. Anything apart from Christ, apart from His broken Body, apart from His living sacrifice is cursed. Jesus' body *had* to be broken for us, because King Adam brought the curse of sin on all creation. This is the state of *every person on earth* apart from the broken Body of Christ. The Bible says:

Ephesians 2:1-2² (CEV) "In the past you were dead because you sinned and fought against God. You followed the ways of this world and obeyed the devil. He rules the world, and his spirit has power over everyone who doesn't obey God."

You were under a state where you *obeyed the same Evil One who enticed King Adam to give up paradise*. This is where you were, and where you are even now if you have not accepted Christ to be your Lord and Savior. If you needed to come away from Satan and toward Jesus to have a *blessed eternity*, you need to remember that *you must continue to obey Jesus* if you expect to have a *blessed now*.

If your friendship with Jesus Christ is not the most important thing in your life, and if you are not living

your life *through the lens of that friendship*, then you are planting the tree of happiness in *cursed earth* - and it just won't grow there. Your happiness cannot be based on nor limited by the things of this earth. If your happiness is based on the *foods you eat*, or the *television you watch*, or the *money you make*, or the *romantic liaisons you have*, or on the *knowledge or education you have*, or on *anything else that is not friendship with Jesus* - then you are planting in cursed earth.

Illustration Dr. O.S. Hawkins said: "**[People have] three connections or relationships in life. We have a relationship with others ... the outward connection. We have a relationship with ourselves ... the inward connection. We have a relationship with God ... the upward connection [or] the [power] source. We will never be properly related to others until we are properly related to ourselves, and we will never be properly related to ourselves until we are properly related to God.**"

You are only **properly related to God** when Jesus Christ is your best Friend. In Jesus' day there were four religious groups of people. Each one of these groups had a *little light from God* - but they still fell far short of where Christ took us. These people were:

a. The **Essenes**, who believe that the Way to God was to *separate yourself from contact* with the world. These people usually went off and, like monks, lived together in small closed communes. It is true that the Christian *should not be friends with the world* - the Bible says:

James 4:4³ (HCSB) "Adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? So whoever wants to be the world's friend becomes God's enemy."

You can be friendly to others who are not saved, but when your friendship with the world *exceeds* your friendship with Jesus, then this is **hostility toward God**. And if you're hostile toward God, you will never truly find happiness in this life.

b. The **Pharisees**, who believed that the Way to God was *tradition* and *Bible knowledge*. It is true that knowledge of God's Word is important to the Christian - but oh my Beloved, you must *never ever* forget that Broken Body! The Pharisees held *knowledge and tradition in greater regard* than they held *friendship with Jesus*. Bible knowledge without *loving the Broken Savior* creates monsters who will condemn Jesus for healing on the Sabbath Day⁴. The Bible warns us:

1 Corinthians 8:1-3⁵ (NASB) Now concerning things

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Holman Christian Standard Bible Broadman Holman

4 (Mark 3:1-6 KJV) "And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand. {2} And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him. {3} And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth. {4} And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace. {5} And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other. {6} And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him."

5New American Standard Bible Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971,

sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have knowledge Knowledge makes arrogant, but love edifies. If anyone supposes that he knows anything, he has not yet known as he ought to know; but if anyone loves God, he is known by Him."

When your friendship with the Broken Christ is first, your knowledge will be seasoned with Godly love.

c. The **Zealots** were people who believed in *revolutionary change*. In fact, Judas Iscariot was a Zealot - and many have speculated that the reason he betrayed Jesus Christ is because he wanted to start an uprising against Rome.

d. The **Sadducees** were very *liberal* in their theology, but they were also very liberal in their devotion to *social reform*. Jesus Himself often *reformed* people's way of thinking. He treated women and children with respect, and was willing to listen to and love sinners. It is good to love others, to want better things for the homeless and the destitute. But *social reform* apart from *friendship with Jesus* is just another form of idolatry. Your friendship with Christ must be first in all that you do.

The *most important allegiance* that you will ever have is the relationship you have with God the Father through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. No one *ever retains happiness* apart from a growing, surrendered relationship with the Savior! The tree of happiness *cannot grow* in this corrupt earth. You must be fully, joyously, wonderfully sold out to Jesus.

1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation

You may be either **Sadducee, Zealot, Pharisee, or Essene** and have a small power source. But until you give your heart to Jesus, you are planting the tree of happiness in cursed earth!

One day our Lord Jesus Christ walked up on a small hill or a "mountain" in Capernaum, sat down, and began to teach. One of the truths that our Savior taught was this:

(Matthew 6:19-21 KJV) "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: {20} But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: {21} For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Jesus Christ emphasized that happiness in this life can *never be attained and retained* if your vision goes no higher than the things of this earth. Let the Lord's Table remind you that *He was broken for you - now you be broken for Him!*

2. The Lord's Table Is A Covenant That Demands Total Surrender!

(Matthew 26:27-28 KJV) "And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

Jesus tells us of His Blood, "**Drink ye all of it**". Look at

that word **all**. The Lord didn't ask us to drink *a little* of it, to just have a *sip* of His Blood - but we were to drink **all** of it.

Illustration There's nothing I like better on a hot summer day than to go swimming in a cool pool of water. Most people will, before getting in a pool of water, go to the edge of that pool and *put a toe* in the water. You see, most of us like to *experiment* and know how cold or uncomfortable the water's going to be *before* we get in it. I don't like to do that, nor do I like to *slowly lower myself* into the water. That's like torture! The best thing to do is to just jump off and *dive into the pool!* It might shock my system when I hit that cold water, but I believe it's much better to *commit to the water* and cool off!

Too many people like to *try on Jesus* like they try on clothes at Wal-Mart. There is no benefit whatsoever in this type of relationship with God. Better to dive into the pool of His love, than to remain at the side dipping your toe into the water. Jesus said:

"this is my blood of the new testament"

That word we translate **testament**⁶ actually means a **covenant**, or a **contract between two parties**. In the Old Testament God told His people Israel that a day was coming when He would make a **new covenant** with them. The Bible tells us:

(Hebrews 8:10 KJV) "For this is the covenant that I

⁶ diatheke {dee-ath-ay'-kay}, a compact between two parties

will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:"

that this **new covenant** would not be like the old covenant, a mere agreement between man and God. The new covenant that God would give His people would cause the old covenant to be thrown out - and the Law of God to be *written in the hearts of those who love the Lord*. Jesus Christ is the *mediator* of the New Covenant:

(Hebrews 12:24 KJV) "And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

The Covenant that Christ made with the believer demanded *total surrender* from Jesus. He had to commit fully to you. If you want to be blessed in the relationship that Christ offers, then you must fully commit to Him.

A little faith may save you, but a little faith and a little commitment to Jesus will not bless you.

Illustration October 14, 1947 may not mean anything to you, but it was an important day in American history. That was the day that Chuck Yeager broke the sound barrier, going faster than 740 miles an hour. Though pilots believed it was possible to break the sound barrier, few felt confident enough to push their aircraft beyond the speed of sound. Several aircraft had broken into pieces when they tried, and this made many pilots uneasy about trying it. In an interview with *Popular Mechanic*

Magazine Yeager stated:

"Fear crouched in the deep recesses of the mind--present, accounted for, but well-controlled." As the mother ship released the X-1 in a sudden lurch, "My heart was in my mouth, stomach right behind it."

That day, Oct. 14, 1947, Yeager kept both his fear and his plane under control. As the familiar pounding began, Yeager watched as the Machmeter hesitated at .96, and then jumped to 1.06 (700 mph at 43,000 ft.). He assumed shock waves caused this effect. Suddenly, the ride became smooth. As Yeager described it, there was "no buffet, no jolt, no shock." Those waiting on the ground heard the world's first man-made sonic boom, and thought at first that something had gone wrong. But it hadn't. Yeager had sprinted past the speed of sound.

The Lord's Table reminds you that the commitment between the believer and the Savior is a *total commitment*. Just as Chuck Yeager had to overcome his fear to push his aircraft beyond the sound barrier, you need to overcome your reluctance in *total surrender* to Christ. The Christian way of life is a way of life designed by our Loving God through Jesus Christ our Lord. It is a *shared way of life*. Just as we *share* the Lord's Table with Jesus and with one another, we *share* the life of Christ with Christ. We are *adopted* Children of God because of His shed Blood, we are *equipped* Children of God because of His Spirit.

Illustration The historian Will Durant stated [in western

civilization] **"the Person Who stands out above all others is Christ. He is the most permanent influence on our thoughts but not on our actions. Our actions are very seldom Christian, but our *theology often is - we wish we could behave like Christ*".**

Though Durant was *not* a Christian, his words are very often shown as true by the way we live our lives. But the Lord's Table reminds us that we who believe are *supposed* to partner together with Christ in all that we do. Our Lord said:

(Luke 22:19 KJV) "And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me."

The Lord's Table is a reminder that we are to *take up our Cross and follow Him*.⁷ The Lord's Table is a reminder that what we are doing as Christians is *more than mere ritual*, but it is a reminder that we are to *put on the lord Jesus Christ* every single day of our lives.⁸ The Lord's Table is a reminder of the awesome responsibility Jesus

7 (Matthew 16:24 KJV) "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

(Mark 8:34 KJV) "And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

(Mark 10:21 KJV) "Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me."

8 (Romans 13:14 KJV) "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."

took on when He went to the Cross - and of the awesome *debt* we owe Him. It is a reminder that we are to *walk worthy of our calling*, living in the very power of God.⁹

The Christian Way of Life is more than mere knowledge - it is power. Power to live, power to love, power to serve, power to reach others in the name of Jesus.

We are meant to have more than a *nominal relationship* with Jesus Christ our Savior. We are meant to have an intimate, personal, growing, vibrant, ever living and ever loving relationship with Him. That's what the Lord's Table teaches us. My momma used to sing a song I'm sure you remember:

**What a friend we have in Jesus;
All our sins and griefs to bear.
What a privilege to carry,
Everything to God in prayer.
Oh what peace we often forfeit,
Oh what needless pain we bear.
All because we do not carry;
Everything to God in prayer.**

We have a friend, and more than a friend in Jesus. I pray that this message touches your hearts, opens your minds,

9 (Ephesians 4:1 KJV) "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,"

(Colossians 1:10 KJV) "That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;"

(1 Thessalonians 2:12 KJV) "That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory."

and leads you to walk in Him Who loves you forever.

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