

What Goes In

Maundy Thursday
April 6, 2023
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Matthew 26:17-30 ¹⁷ Now on the first *day* of the *Feast of the Unleavened Bread* the disciples came to Jesus, saying to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?" ¹⁸ And He said, "Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, 'The Teacher says, "My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at your house with My disciples.'"" ¹⁹ So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them; and they prepared the Passover. ²⁰ When evening had come, He sat down with the twelve. ²¹ Now as they were eating, He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me." ²² And they were exceedingly sorrowful, and each of them began to say to Him, "Lord, is it I?" ²³ He answered and said, "He who dipped *his* hand with Me in the dish will betray Me. ²⁴ "The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born." ²⁵ Then Judas, who was betraying Him, answered and said, "Rabbi, is it I?" He said to him, "You have said it." ²⁶ And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." ²⁷ Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. ²⁸ "For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. ²⁹ "But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom." ³⁰ And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

I'm starting this evening with a quote from the TV show *The Office*.

Michael Scott: I gassed up the car. Actually, I put diesel in this time, trying to save some money.

Jim: Michael, you shouldn't have done that.

Michael Scott: Happy to do it.

From <https://tvquote.es/the-office/quote/matnqi/>

We know that it matters a good deal what we put in our gas tank. You can't put diesel into a car that it made to take unleaded. It will ruin the engine.

Similarly, we know that it matters what we eat. The other day I found some beef spareribs in our freezer. They were so good but you could see thick slabs of fat layered around that meat.

We know that it matters what we put in our bodies. We know it matters what we put in our car. We seldom stop to consider the consequences of what we are putting into our soul.

In the second epistle of Peter, the apostle speaking of Lot reminds us:

2 Peter 2:8 NKJ that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds

Notice that Peter does not say in a passive voice "his soul was tormented," but rather in an active voice that he tormented his soul. Lot was righteous by faith in Jesus Christ. Yet, Lot made choices which whether he realized it or not were tormenting his soul. He made the choice to live among such wicked people and daily took in through eyes and ears the filth of the sin that surrounded him.

It matters what we take in, not only what we eat but even more so what we hear and see.

Like Lot we live in the midst of a sinful world, and we cannot entirely escape the sinfulness. However, also like Lot we often make choices which greatly increases the amount of sin, which we hear and see. Rather than staying away from it, we tend to think it's not a big deal. We also torment our souls, often without even realizing it, with the things we choose to watch and listen to and by the company we choose to keep.

It is into this miasma of filth and sin that Christ comes with His holy supper. Here He gives to us something that is without filth or even the taint of sin. Something pure and clean and holy. Not only something good and healthy to take in but something which will cleanse and remove the filth that is a daily part of our lives. Here is the cup of salvation, here is the body and blood of Christ, here is that which is pure and free from sin.

We have in our congregation a man whose job it is to provide people with clean safe water. His job is to help people receive the water they need without drinking in the contaminants of the earth. Jesus knowing the sin that surrounds us provide us with a source of spiritual water free of contaminates. Spiritual water that is not only pure but can also filter out all those contaminates.

It matters what we take into our soul, and gathering together weekly to hear His word and receive His body and blood is the best thing we can take in.

Matthew 26:28 this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

The body and blood which we receive here tonight, Jesus promises that it gives the "**remission** of sins." That is the sending away. It is pure itself and it purifies our souls.

There is a children's song, "be careful little eyes what you see . . . Be careful little ears what you hear." That song reminds us that our Father in heaven who loves us is watching everything you hear and do and say. What do you want your heavenly Father to see you doing?

However, more important than what our Heavenly Father sees is what sin does to our own soul.

1 Corinthians 6:18-19 NKJ 18 Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. 19 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?

Paul reminds us of how one sin can harm our body, but all sins harm our soul, not just those we do, but also those that surround us to influence our life.

The apostle Paul reminds us:

Galatians 5:19-23 NKJ 19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

Such things we ought not to do but also, we should desire as much as possible to remove ourselves far from them and not even witness such things.

These things are the spiritual equivalent of secondhand smoke. It is not only those who smoke whose lungs may be ruined by that smoke but also those who are around them. This is secondhand sin, it harms not only those who do it but those who see it and hear it.

In this supper God has taken these elements which are of this earth, and He has made them into something greater. Through these earthly elements He has given us His very body and blood. In the same way that He transforms this bread and wine, so too He transforms those who receive this bread and wine so that we are no longer of the earth but are now "of God's kingdom." We are renewed in the Spirit and have become the sons of God.

Ephesians 4:23-24 23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

It matters what we take in, that which surrounds us in our daily life often eats away at our soul, but what we receive tonight, renews our spirit in the image of God.

God give us visual images of the correct attitude towards sin as seen at the foot of Mount Sinai. There no unclean thing could touch the mountain, or it would die. Again, in the rule concerning the ark of the covenant, anything which is unclean will perish if it touches the holy ark. This ought to be our attitude towards sin. Jude reminds us of this.

Jude 1:23-24 23 but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh. 24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,

Our attitude towards sin should be to understand the great harm it does to our soul.

Jesus says, "this is my body."

What we receive from God here is the "true body and blood." It is real and true as opposed to the things of this world. The things of this world, even when they are "true" by the standards of the world, are still only a temporary truth. Christ's body and blood remain forever.

As Jesus said to the Samaritan woman "[it] shall become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."

Some of you might be drooling desiring those beef spareribs I was talking about earlier. If we knew what was good for us, we would desire even more fervently every day this holy supper. In our text the Lord greatly desired this supper. We too ought to drool over a desire to receive this source of truth and purity in the midst of a world of sin. Amen