

Rev. Danny Mackey  
Holy (Maundy) Thursday  
March 29, 2018  
Mark 14:12-26; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17  
Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Muncie, Ind.

[Adapted from Rev. Brent Kuhlman's sermon series in *Concordia Pulpit Resources*, Vol. 27, Part 2 (Concordia: St. Louis), 63-64.]

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

Remembering the Sabbath Day by keeping it holy is all about God being God for you, His sinners, through His Word. God is a talker, a speaker, doing and giving what He says with His words. Did you hear that?

**GOD GIVES GIFTS, SERVES HIS SINNERS, THROUGH HIS WORDS!**

So, you're given by God to take a little time out of the hustle-and-the-bustle (yes, that even includes sports; yes, it includes work) in order to let God speak to you through His Word, to be perfectly passive receivers of His speaking to you through His Word. Through His Word, He actually holies you. He sanctifies you. He cleanses and purifies you from all your sin through His divine Word preached and proclaimed by the preacher, namely,, "I forgive you." When you're hearing those words or any of Christ's words, you're hearing Christ Himself. But the best Word, the most for-you Word, is the Word of forgiveness because it is the living Word of the living Christ that makes you to be living, too.

Consequently, you're to make use of God's Word and exercise yourself in it. Or, as the Small Catechism teaches—let's all recite it together:

**The Third Commandment**

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night in which He was betrayed, preaches a magnificent sermon about the Sabbath Day in the way of the Third Commandment. His preaching is His divine words of promise attached to and permeating the Passover meals' bread and wine. "Take," Jesus says of the bread, "this is My body." With regard to the cup of wine, Jesus flat out guarantees: "This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many."

These are the words of the divine, eternal majesty Himself. From His own divine mouth, from His own divine lips, He who spoke all creation into existence by speaking, “Let there be light,” and it was! The words of the Lord’s Supper are God’s sacred Word. They are His most holy Word. Gladly you are to hear them. Happily you are to learn them, make use of them. After all, they are for you. For your benefit—giving you the forgiveness of sins. And where there is the forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.

But will you? Or are you bored with His words? Do you routinely blow off His words? Ignore them? Disregard them? Snub your nose at them? Or would you change the Lord’s words to what you believe are better words? Such as, “This symbolizes my body,” or “This is only a symbol of my blood,” which translates into...just bread and wine on the altar...only bread and wine in the pastor’s hands...merely bread and wine in my mouth. No body. No blood.

But that’s not what Jesus says or promises. “Take, this bread is My body.” “This cup of wine is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.” There’s no spinning it. No massaging it. Is means is. The bread in the Lord’s Supper is His body. The wine in the Lord’s Supper is His blood. St. Paul makes this very clear when he asks you rhetorical questions. “The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation [or communion] in the blood of Christ?” Well, is it? Of course it is! “The bread that we break, is it not a participation [or communion] in the body of Christ?” Well, is it? Of course it is!

So tonight you heard the Lord’s words from the Lord Himself. It is His sermon, His preaching to you and for you: “Take, this is My body.” “This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.” Again, these are the words of the crucified and risen Jesus, who won and achieved the treasure of salvation for you in His Good Friday death. That which was once acquired under Pontius Pilate at the cross on Golgotha is ever again distributed: the body of Jesus given for you, the blood of Jesus shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. Through these specific words of proclamation (“Take, this is My body...My blood”), Jesus speaks to you. He gives you exactly what He says through His words—namely, His body and His blood for you for the forgiveness of your sins. That’s why the pastor holds before the congregation the consecrated elements and says the Pax Domini—“The peace of the Lord be with you always.” Again, His words are preaching

words. He's talking to you in and through His words so you know and believe exactly what He's giving.

The whole point of the Sacrament is this. It is the Lord's service to you and for you. He came not to be served but to serve. He is among you as one who serves. He bestows His body and blood with the bread and the wine by virtue of His Word. You are to receive or commune passively, to be given to by the Lord from His Word of promise. That's in keeping with the Third Commandment's point of making sure you hold His Word sacred and gladly hear and learn it—making use of it, exercising yourself in it. That means you go to the Lord's Supper when it's offered and that you believe what Jesus gives according to His Word. You need it. He gives it. And as you believe His Word, you get precisely what He promises: forgiveness, life, salvation.

In the name of Jesus.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in + Christ Jesus.