



Remembering Jesus

2 Corinthians 5:21

1. The Life of Jesus - Sinless
2. The Death of Jesus - Sacrifice
3. Our Benefit in Jesus - Substitution

Every 4 to 6 weeks at Rock Valley Bible Church, we have an opportunity to celebrate the Lord's Supper together. We aren't on any set schedule for doing so. I am simply aware of our periodic practice and whenever my sermon seems particularly appropriate for the Lord's Supper, we celebrate it. Last week, we finished our study of Matthew, chapter 7. Rather than plunging right into Matthew 8 this week, I wanted to take a break for a week and use it as an opportunity to focus our attention specifically on the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, and what it means to us, before we celebrate the Lord's Supper.

Whenever the Lord's Supper is celebrated, we always rehearse the actions and words of Jesus on the night in which He was betrayed. When Jesus took the bread, gave thanks, broke it, and shared it among His disciples, He said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me" (1 Cor. 11:24). Likewise, when he took the cup to share with His disciples, he said, "do this ... in remembrance of Me" (1 Cor. 11:25). The Lord's Supper is a great opportunity for us to reflect upon the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus even instructs us to do so.

I have entitled my message this morning, "Remembering Jesus." As strange as it sounds, we can often be guilty of failing to remember Jesus. We can become so engrossed in all of our activities in the world and with our family that Jesus can easily be forgotten. Even in all of the activities of the church or in our scriptural study or in our prayers, we can easily forget that Jesus is the center of it all. This was an error that came up at Ephesus, as men were teaching "strange doctrines" and "myths and endless genealogies." These are the things that give rise to "fruitless discussion" and "mere speculation," rather than furthering the administration of God, which is by faith (1 Tim. 1:3-7). Their problem was that they had become so enamoured by other things, that they were distracted from the main thing, Jesus' work of redemption accomplished for us.

Charles Spurgeon once commented upon our tendency to forget Jesus. He wrote, "It seems ... that Christians may forget Christ! ... It appears almost impossible that those who have been redeemed by the blood of the dying Lamb, and loved with an everlasting love by the eternal Son of God, should forget that gracious Saviour; but, if startling to the ear, it is, alas! too apparent to the eye to allow us to deny the crime. Forget Him who never forgot us! Forget Him who poured His blood forth for our sins! Forget Him who loved us even to the death! Can it be possible? Yes, it is not only possible, but conscience confesses that it is too sadly a fault with all of us. ... Does not your conscience say that this is true? Do you not find yourselves forgetful of Jesus? Some creature steals away your heart, and you are unmindful of Him upon whom your affection ought to be set. Some earthly business engrosses your attention when you should fix your eye steadily upon the cross. It is the incessant turmoil of the world, the constant attraction of earthly things which takes away the soul from Christ. ... Let us charge ourselves to bind a heavenly forget-me-not about our hearts for Jesus our Beloved, and, whatever else we let slip, let us hold fast to Him." (Morning and Evening, April 26, AM).

This is often the experience of the Christian. The things of the world begin to distract us and pull us away from what ought to saturate our mind -- Jesus Christ. So, this morning, I would like to "remember Jesus" by looking at one verse of Scripture and allowing it to direct our thoughts back to Him: 2 Corinthians 5:21.

There are certain verses in the Bible that often stand out as great summary statements. These are the ones that are often memorized. These are the ones that are often referred to in sermons. Verses like John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." Or John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me." Or, Ephesians 2:8,9, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not as a result of works, that no one should boast." Or, Romans 6:23, "The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

In our case this morning, our verse of scripture is like these verses, which many of you may know. It says, "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). This morning, I would like to expound the truths given to us in this one verse. This is a difficult verse to preach, because there are many here who know it so well. Yet, our purpose this morning is to "remember Jesus." My aim this morning is to speak that my words will come as cool waters to refresh your soul. Just as you return to a simple glass of water to quench your thirst, so this morning, I would like to quench your spiritual thirst by directing our minds upon the work of Jesus on our behalf. The words of this verse ought always to be found refreshing to our souls.

This verse has been called, "The heart of the gospel," because it gets down to the fundamental meaning of the cross of Jesus Christ. This verse speaks of the life of Jesus Christ, that was sinless. This verse speaks of the death of Jesus Christ, that was a sacrifice. This verse speaks about the benefit His death to us, that was a death of substitution.

First, let's look at ...

1. The Life of Jesus - Sinless

This is contained in the phrase, "**who knew no sin.**" This is talking about the fact that Jesus Christ, lived and walked upon the earth without ever sinning -- not even once. He had no personal, experiential knowledge of sin. He "knew no sin." Though Jesus "emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men" (Phil. 2:7), He never sinned as a man.

Theologians often separate sins into two different categories: the sins of omission and the sins of commission. The sins of omission describe the failing to do what you are commanded to do. The sins of commission describe the doing what you are commanded not to do. Jesus never failed in either of these categories. Never was there a commandment that He violated. Never was there a commandment that He failed to do. Jesus Christ was sinless in every way.

Every preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ struggles to live to the standard to which they preach. I remember one time meeting Donald Whitney, who wrote a book entitled, "Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life." I have read this book and have appreciated his thoughts about the disciplines of the Christian life (i.e. Bible reading, prayer, worship, evangelism, serving, ...). I spoke to him and asked him about the struggles in writing such a book. I asked him, "Was it hard to write and publish such a book? Because you have set the standards of your Christian life so high in these disciplines." He sort of laughed and spoke from his wisdom that has come from his years of preaching. He said, "Well, you never completely live up to what you preach." I know what Don Whitney is talking about. As much as I would long to live up to everything that I have ever preached, I find myself failing in the task. But, Jesus never had this problem. Everything that He ever preached, He lived perfectly.

We just finished studying the Sermon on the Mount. Remember the standard of righteousness to which Jesus called us? He lived it all. He never spoke a word in sinful anger against anyone (Matt. 5:21-26). He never thought a single impure thought, not even once (Matt. 5:27-32). He never failed in any promise He ever made (Matt. 5:33-37). He never sought revenge against any injustice done to Him (Matt. 5:38-42). He loved His enemies and prayed for those who persecuted Him (Matt. 5:43-47). Even when he was put cruelly to death, He prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). He was, as we might say, the perfect man! (Matt. 5:48). It is in this sense that He "fulfilled" the law (Matt. 5:17) -- He met every requirement of its righteous standards, without exception. He did it. He accomplished it. Jesus didn't preach this sermon that we have recently examined without living it Himself, because Jesus was sinless.

Let me try to put it in a simple way. Among children, there are often sibling rivalries. When one child succeeds and does well, the other children are often filled with jealousy and antagonism against them, because they have excelled far beyond what they are capable of doing. There is often a sense of futility that comes along with this in the "under-achieving" child. For instance, the brother of the All-State basketball player, who can barely dribble a basketball, will often struggle with jealousy against his brother. Likewise, the sister of a Valedictorian, who struggles to get "C's" in her class, will often struggle with antagonism against her. Think about how James, (Jesus' half-brother) would have felt. Jesus was so perfect that He was never spanked for His disobedience. (If He was every spanked, it was because His mother or father mis-understood His actions). Jesus always honored His mother and His father in the home. He never complained, "Ah, dad, I don't want to eat my peas." James surely felt frustration often with Jesus' perfection. Mary and Joseph may have said, "James, why do you always complain about making your bed or cleaning your room? Why can't you be like your Brother?"

Could you imagine, children, having a brother or a sister like this? It would be a difficult thing. Why? Because it would expose your own sin. You would constantly be confronted with how you fail to live as you should. Kids at school hate the over-achiever, because it exposes how much they under-achieve. Fellow employees hate those who work hard, because it exposes how lazy they are. And sinning people, often hate the light because their "deeds are evil" (John 3:19) and they don't want their sinful deeds to be exposed. The testimony of the Bible is that in Jesus, "there is no sin" (1 John 3:5). Jesus, "committed no sin" (1 Peter 2:22). Jesus was "without sin" (Heb. 4:15).

We are so unlike Jesus. The Bible is full of words to describe sin. There are more than a dozen words in both the Old Testament and in the New Testament that describe sin in some way. For instance, in the Old Testament, here are some words ...

means, "to sin."

means, "to err," or "to go astray."

means, "to overstep" or "to transgress."

means, "to turn aside" (as in "departing from the way")

means, "to rebel" or "to transgress."

means, "to act unfaithfully" or "to act treacherously."

means, "to deal treacherously" or "to be deceitful"

means, "to treat violently"

means, "to do evil" or "to inflict misery, sorrow or calamity."

means, "to be wicked" or "to do wickedness"

means, "to be guilty" or "to offend"

means, "trouble, sorrow, or wickedness"

means, "wrongdoing, injustice, unrighteousness."

means, "to bend" or "to twist" or "to distort"

The New Testament uses the following words, ...

amartanw means, "to miss" or "to miss the mark"
planaw means, "to go astray" or "to lead astray"
parabainw means, "to go beyond" or "to transgress"
paraptwma means, "to fall aside"
parakouw means, "to hear badly" and thus, "disobey"
apeiqew means, "to be disobedient"
anomia means, "to be against the law"
adikew means, "to be unrighteous"
asebew means, "to be ungodly, irreligious, impious"
ofeilhma means, "to be in debt" or "to owe" (in the moral sense)
kakoV means, "badness" or "whatever is evil"
ponhroV means, "evil" in the sense of being "opposed to God"
(For both of these lists, I am indebted to my Theology II class syllabus, written by Dr. George Zemek, my favorite professor at the Master's Seminary).

Jesus is the opposite of all of these words. He committed none of that wickedness! He never sinned. He never went astray. He never transgressed or departed from the way. He never rebelled. He never acted unfaithfully. He never dealt deceitfully with anybody. He was never sinfully violent. He never inflicted misery on others. He was never wicked or guilty. He never practiced any wrongdoing. He was pure in every way. He never missed the mark. He never went astray. He never went beyond. He never fell aside. He never disobeyed. He never resisted the law. He was never unrighteous, ungodly or irreligious. He never owed God anything. He never exhibited any evil or badness or opposition to God.

How different this is from us. Years before Jesus was born, He was called, "Thy Holy One" (Ps. 16:10). At His conception, Jesus was described as a "holy offspring" (Luke 1:35). Throughout His life, no one ever could lay accusation against Him. In a theological debate with the Jews, He once said, "Which one of you convicts Me of sin?" (John 8:46), to which no one was able to respond. Though tempted by Satan Himself, He escaped without sinning (Matt. 4:1-11; Heb. 2:18). In Luke's account of the temptation, he wrote, "When the devil had finished every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time" (Luke 4:13). Perhaps this opportune time came shortly before His death. Merrill Tenney writes, "The betrayal by Judas, the frustration of human hopes, the disappointment of apparent failure, the agony of death--these would make him especially susceptible to suggestion or temptation. Jesus did not fear Satan because Satan had no claim on him. There was nothing in Jesus' character or action that could be used against him. Satan had no valid accusation that could be used as leverage to divert Jesus from the will of the Father. His obedience had been perfect, and he intended to complete the Father's purpose irrespective of what it might cost him" (The Expositor's Bible Commentary, The Gospel of John, p. 149). At the trial of Jesus, it was only because the Sanhedrin sought to obtain false testimony against Him (Matt. 26:59-61), that He was handed over to Pilate. It was only the crowds that finally convinced Pilate to hand Jesus over to be crucified, because he repeatedly told the people, "I find no guilt in Him" (John 18:28) and repeatedly made efforts to release Him (John 19:12), because of His innocence. Yet, even when accused falsely, we are told that Jesus "committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously" (1 Peter 2:22-23).

This was the life of Jesus. It was a sinless life. Perhaps you might be asking yourself, "Is this really important for us?" Oh, yes, it is important for us! **It was the life of Jesus that established the groundwork for the death of Jesus.** This brings us to our second point ...

2. The Death of Jesus - Sacrifice

Look back at 2 Corinthians 5:21. It says, "He made Him who knew no sin **to be sin on our behalf.**" The picture here is that of a sacrifice. In the case of our text this morning, Paul is obviously referring to the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross at Golgotha, some 2,000 years ago.

Now, according to Old Testament Law, an animal was required to be sacrificed when a sin was committed. This is because sins need to be punished. Israel was told to sacrifice an animal to picture the punishment being received by the animal, rather than by the person who sinned. The principle with God is this, "The soul who sins will die" (Ezek. 18:4). According to the Old Testament Law, it was the poor animal, who had done no wrong, who was slaughtered in place of the sinner. This is the purpose of a sacrifice -- to kill an animal, rather than kill the one who sinned. This was to teach the nation of Israel what sins deserves.

With these sacrifices, there were various laws and rules and regulations, depending upon ...

- ... the type of sin that was committed (intentional or unintentional sin)
- ... the type of sacrifice (guilt offering for a particular sin of an individual or a sin offering for the sins of the people)
- ... the financial status of the one offering the sacrifice (can the offender afford a lamb? Can the offender afford two turtledoves or two young pigeons? Can the offender afford a tenth of an ephah of fine flour? - Lev. 5:7,11).

Yet, in all of this, there was always the commandment to offer the best sacrifice to the LORD that you could. The sacrifice needed to be a bull, "without defect" (Lev. 4:3) or a goat, "without defect" (Lev. 4:28) or a lamb "without defect" (Lev. 4:32). Throughout the Law, God had always stressed the importance of an unblemished sacrifice.

Perhaps you remember when the people of Israel had deviated from this and the LORD rebuked them through Malachi the prophet saying, "When you present the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? And when you present the lame and sick, is it not evil?" (Malachi 1:8). They had deviated from the requirements of the law. God has always demanded the first-born and the best from His people. These people in Israel had

figured that the blind and the lame animal was of no use to them anyway, so why not sacrifice them to the LORD. In this they were wrong and God had said that He would not accept such a sacrifice.

In the Law God has spoken, "Any man of the house of Israel or of the aliens in Israel who presents his offering, whether it is any of their votive or any of their freewill offerings, which they present to the LORD for a burnt offering -- for you to be accepted -- it must be a male without defect from the cattle, the sheep, or the goats. Whatever has a defect, you shall not offer, for it will not be accepted for you. And when a man offers a sacrifice of peace offerings to the LORD to fulfill a special vow, or for a freewill offering, of the herd or of the flock, it must be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no defect in it. Those [that are] blind or fractured or maimed or having a running sore or eczema or scabs, you shall not offer to the LORD, nor make of them an offering by fire on the altar to the LORD" (Lev. 22:18-22).

So, when the Israelites were presenting the lame and sick up for sacrifice, God so hated this practice that He said, "Oh that there was one among you who would shut the gates, that you might not uselessly kindle fire on My altar! I am not pleased with you" says the LORD of hosts, "Nor will I accept an offering from you" (Malachi 1:10). God hated this sacrifice, because it taught the error that God didn't require the best to be sacrificed. These foreshadowed the perfect, ultimate sacrifice who would come, to whom all of these sacrifices pointed. It would be wrong for the ultimate sacrifice to have any sort of blemish in any way. If Messiah was to come, and offer Himself up as a guilt offering (according to Isaiah 53:10), He, Himself, must be a pure and sinless individual. There is no other way. And since all of us have sinned and gone astray, the ultimate sacrifice must have been the God-man, who was pure and holy in every way. **If you destroy the sinlessness of Jesus, you destroy His sacrifice on the cross.**

Around Easter, some of the major news magazines, Newsweek or Time, often run a front page article on "Jesus." They are often taken from a humanistic, liberal perspective, which denies the inerrancy of the Bible. As such, Jesus is often displayed as a "good human teacher" as if He was on the level of Budha or Ghandi. But listen, everything in you must cry against that. Because if Jesus was simply another human teacher, He would have been a sinner. And if Jesus was a sinner, His sacrifice upon the cross wasn't a pure sacrifice. And if His sacrifice upon the cross wasn't a pure sacrifice, God cannot accept such a sacrifice. And if God cannot accept such a sacrifice, then we are still dead in our sins! So, when someone says, "Oh, Jesus was just a good, human teacher, it is as if they were taking out an axe and hacking away at the root of the tree called Christianity.

Oh, yes, my friends, Jesus was indeed a human, but He was also the sinless Son of God, Who alone could have accomplished our redemption, simply because He was sinless. Peter describes Jesus' sacrifice in this way, "You were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ" (1 Peters 1:18-19). The blood of Christ, isn't like silver. The blood of Christ, isn't like gold. These things will perish. But, the blood of Christ was like a lamb unblemished. the blood of Christ was like a lamb spotless, which will never fade away. The writer to the Hebrews says it like this, "It was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens, who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself" (Heb. 7:26-27). The writer is saying that our high priest didn't have to offer sacrifices for Himself, because he was "innocent" and "undefiled." If you destroy the sinlessness of Jesus, you destroy His sacrifice on the cross. And if you destroy Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, Christianity crumbles.

Finally, let's look at ...

3. Our Benefit in Jesus - Substitution

Notice in 2 Corinthians 5:21 it says, "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin **on our behalf**." Literally, this is best translated, "for us." "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin **for us**," that is, "in our place." In other words, "though Jesus was sinless, our sin was upon Him and He paid the price of our sin for us." This is taught all over the Bible. Consider the following verses, ...

- "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life **for the sheep**" (i.e. in the place of the sheep) (John 10:11)..
 - "even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life **for the sheep**" (i.e. in the place of the sheep) (John 10:15). Notice that Jesus did so willingly in verse 18.
 - "For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died **for the ungodly**" (i.e. in our place) (Romans 5:6)..
 - "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died **for us**" (i.e. in our place) (Romans 5:8).
 - "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up **for us all**, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:32).
 - "Christ died **for our sins** according to the Scriptures" (i.e. in place of our sins) (1 Corinthians 15:3).
 - "[Jesus Christ] who gave Himself **for our sins** that He might deliver us out of this present evil age" (i.e. in the place of our sins) (Galatians 1:4)..
 - "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up **for me**" (i.e. in place of me) (Galatians 2:20).
 - "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse **for us**" (i.e. in our place) (Galatians 3:13).
- If you are interested in more, you might want to look up the following: Eph. 5:2, 25; 1 Thess. 5:10; 1 Tim. 2:6; Titus 2:14; Heb. 2:9; 5:3; 6:20; 7:25, 27; 9:7, 24; 10:12; 1 Pet. 2:21; 3:18; 1 John 3:16.

This is the concept of substitution in the Scripture. In the times of the Old Testament, it was the sinless animal that would receive the punishment due to be paid to the sinner. Yet, in Christ Jesus the marvelous truth of the good news is that you no longer need to lay your hand upon the head of a bull to pass off the punishment for your sins. Rather you lay your hand, by faith, upon the head of Jesus Christ, who died in your place as your substitute for your sins! We have sung on several occasions in this church, the following words, ...

Not all the blood of beasts on Jewish altars slain, could give the guilty conscience peace, or wash away the stain;

But Christ the heavenly lamb, takes all our sins away, a sacrifice of nobler name and richer blood than they.
My faith would lay her hand on that dear head of thine, while like a penitent I stand and there confess my sin
(Isaac Watts, 1709).

Think of it with me now (if you can). In the past, before Christ came, the only thing that you could do for your sin was to lay your hand upon some animal as the substitute for your sins. But now, we can lay our hand, by faith, upon the head of Jesus Christ, who took our place on the cross. Last week, we sang a hymn (that we have been singing in our prayer time before the service), which reads, ...

When Satan tempts me to despair, and tells me of the guilt within,
upward I look and see Him there, who made an end to all my sin.
Because the sinless Savior died, my sinful soul is counted free;
For God the Just is satisfied to look on Him and pardon me.

Behold him there! The risen Lamb, my perfect, spotless righteousness;
The great unchangeable I AM, the King of glory and of grace!
One with himself I cannot die, my soul is purchased with His blood;
My life is hid with Christ on high, with Christ, my Saviour and my God
(Charitie Bancroft, 1841-1892).

The concept of substitution also dominates this hymn as well. God is satisfied to look upon Jesus, as our substitute, and pardon us in return. Our soul is purchased with His blood in the sense that Jesus' blood was the substitute for our blood, which deserves to be shed.

Last January, our own Governor George Ryan, declared a moratorium on executions in the state of Illinois after Anthony Porter had been freed from prison after 15 years on death-row, because he was shown to be innocent of the crime for which he was punished. Since that time, Governor Ryan has been trying to figure out what to do with the 160 people on Illinois' death row. This week started the clemency hearings, in which all of these death row inmates will have their chance to seek to demonstrate their innocence. George Ryan is looking for even one case that casts doubt on the legitimacy of the guilt of any of these 160 people. He has made public his thoughts of exonerating every single one of these death-row inmates. Think about what is going through the minds of many of these people. I believe that many of them are hoping that just maybe, possibly, George Ryan might be convinced that since the machinery of death can never be perfected, no one needs to die. I believe that there is a lot of hopeful speculation from these people on death row.

But, I am here to tell you today that with Christ, there is no hopeful speculation. "God made Him, who knew no sin to be sin for us!" You simply need to believe it and trust it. This is the message of Christ crucified. This is the message of the gospel. But the good news gets a whole lot better in the last phrase of 2 Corinthians 5:21, "That we might become the righteousness of God in Him." When God raised Jesus from the dead, He declared that the sacrifice of Jesus was acceptable to Him. We won't get to heaven with a hopeful speculation that inquires of God, "Did you accept Jesus' sacrifice for my sins?" God has declared that Jesus' sacrifice is acceptable to Him. We simply need to believe this.

I think again of these death-row inmates. They are hoping that they will be freed from the death penalty that is due them. But Christ does far more than simply free us from the death penalty. Because He took our place, He opens the door to death row and lets us free. It is as if the death-row inmates are let out of prison, with their death sentence pardoned and given \$250,000 to start a new life. Furthermore, it is as if these inmates are given an honorary doctorate from a university that was never earned, nor deserved, which would guarantee them a well-paying job to provide for them always.

In 2 Corinthians 5:21, we are told that we receive the righteousness of God. Jesus took all of our sin. Jesus gave us all of His righteousness. So, when you reflect upon the purity and holiness and sinlessness of Jesus Christ (as we did in our first point this morning), realize that all of that is yours because of the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ. This is "the righteousness of God [which comes] through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe" (Rom. 3:22). We have a righteousness, "not derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith" (Phil. 3:9).

I have heard it described this way. **When Jesus was put to death on the cross, God treated Him as if He had committed every sin of every person who would ever believe. He bore the punishment for our sin, though He was guilty of none of it. Furthermore, since Jesus died such a death, God treats those who believe in Jesus as if they were as righteous and holy and blameless as Jesus Christ. Though guilty of all of our sin, we bear the punishment for none of it.** (John MacArthur, Spring Bible Conference, Grace Church of DuPage, April 24, 1997). This is the gospel. This is Christ crucified. This is Christ raised from the dead. This is what happened at the cross of Christ. You have been reminded.

So what? I have encapsulated Christianity for you this morning! This is the work of Jesus Christ. Let me ask you, "As I preached through this, what was your response?" Were you moved in your heart? Were you gladdened by it? Did it give you joy? Is your heart filled with overflowing thankfulness and praise and love to God? Will it lead you to speak forth this message? Until this point, I haven't said anything about the context surrounding these words I have expounded this morning. But the entire context is describing the ministry that we all have, as Christians. We are ambassadors for Christ, who have a ministry of reconciliation to the world. We are given the task of telling the world that they can be reconciled to God (2 Cor. 5:18-20). Hearing this message this morning ought to stir you to speak it forth to others in the world.

I ask you these questions because we know that "The word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1:18). If you are unmoved by this truth, I believe that you know nothing of this truth, because you find it foolishness. If this truth has moved you to know and love Jesus Christ in greater ways, rejoice and "walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called" (Eph. 4:1).

As I said at the beginning of my message this morning, we are here this morning to remember Jesus Christ. This is what the Lord's supper is all about. When Jesus took the bread, gave thanks, broke it, and shared it among His disciples, He said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me" (1 Cor. 11:24). Likewise, when he took the cup to share with His disciples, he said, "do this ... in remembrance of Me" (1 Cor. 11:25). Having remembered Jesus, let us celebrate the Lord's supper this morning.

This sermon was delivered to Rock Valley Bible Church on October 20, 2002 by Steve Brandon.
For more information see www.rvbc.cc.