

Wholeness

Quarterly World Digest of Christian Healing

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Gratis.



From the
Editor

“Speak, for your servant is listening!”

God can certainly say some challenging things, none more extreme than this example from Genesis 22:2, “Take your son ... your only son, Isaac, whom you love so much, and ... offer him as a sacrifice to me.” Gulp! How would we have responded to such a message? God must have spoken extraordinarily clearly; and Abraham must have been extremely faithful. That pivotal event in human history was a call for total commitment, and Abraham’s response met God’s standards. It’s notable that he was the only person in scripture to be called ‘the friend of God.’ (Isaiah 41:8) Not even Moses, who met with God face to face, nor David, who was a man after God’s own heart, was called ‘the friend of God.’ Yet that very status of sublime favour is what we were created for.

Well, the first good news is that God will never again ask anyone to sacrifice their child. On our behalf, the Father called upon himself and his Son to endure that most bitter of events, for the fulfilment of his most glorious plan - the effecting of our eternal salvation. Praise and glory to God! The other good news is that God is calling you and me, here and now, to be his friends! This highest privilege isn’t because of anything we’ve done, or will do; it’s because of what Jesus has done. And the invitation comes from Jesus himself, “I call you friends, because I have told you everything I heard from my Father.” Friends tell each other things, and Jesus has a lot to tell us. And so it behoves us to approach prayer not with the attitude, “Listen God, your servant is speaking,” but with a quiet, humble heart, and with an attentive ear. It’s a subtle deception that we can look upon prayer as something we do; as a duty we have, to speak to God. But, as Mark and Patti Virkler tell us in their marvellous book *Dialogue with God*, “It is true that service, productivity, and evangelism are important, even very important. But they must never become goals in themselves. If they do, we have moved back from relationship to law. Such things are important only so far as they are products of communion.” And most certainly, that truth also applies to prayer.

God wants to speak to us today, within our heart, our spirit, our innermost being. Being able to describe where or how that happens isn’t nearly as important as simply accepting that it does, and that the creator of the universe desires to share himself with us as our day proceeds. He wants to share his wisdom, and his plan for our lives; but much more importantly, he wants to share his heart and his love. Indeed, that is the reason for which we exist. Because of Jesus baptising us in the Holy Spirit, divine communion is available to us every minute of every day. “When, however, the Spirit comes, who reveals the truth about God, he will lead you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own authority, but he will speak of what he hears and will tell you of things to come. He will give me glory, because he will take what I say and tell it to you.” (John 16:13-14)

How can we cultivate an openness to hearing our Father’s voice? Jesus gave us the clearest of answers, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father

FORGIVENESS BRINGS HEALING

Rev. Dr Jack Sheffield, Sharing, September 2014.

Jesus said many remarkable things, and here is one of them: “If you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you your sins.” (Matthew 6:14) Wait a minute, isn’t that backwards? Doesn’t God initiate everything? Take love, for instance; Scripture says that we love because he first loved us. Isn’t the same principle true with forgiveness as well? Surely we can forgive because he first forgave us. How can it be that if I don’t forgive my enemies, God cannot forgive me?

A story of Leonardo Da Vinci greatly helped me in understanding this paradox. In one of his greatest works, *The Last Supper*, the master artist modelled the face of Judas Iscariot after a fellow painter who had become Leonardo’s enemy. He so despised the man that he wanted the world to see the face of his nemesis on Judas, so that he too would be forever infamous for his betrayal. However, a serious problem arose.



Rev. Dr. Jack Sheffield

When Leonardo tried to paint the face of Jesus on the canvas, he failed time and again. It frustrated and confused him to no end, until he finally realized what was happening. His bitterness towards his enemy was a huge block to the blessing, peace, love and joy that Jesus gives to those who truly follow His ways. He repented, removed the face of his enemy, forgave him, and immediately received the inspiration and unction to complete the masterpiece.

The greatest healings and miracles we have ever seen have come on the heels of forgiveness for people who have caused hurts. I will never forget an older gentleman who had a five-inch tumour in the palate of his mouth. The cancer was so aggressive that roots were growing upwards into his sinuses, heading for his brain. He was given months to live, and had the pallor of death about him. He was literally ashen grey. One night at a healing service, a message on forgiveness was given. Anna Marie and I looked over at him during the

talk and saw an amazing sight. He was beet red, and was weeping like a little boy. At the altar call for healing prayer, the man stood up and said this, “Several months ago, my partner stole all my money; and left me with nothing. I swore I’d kill him if I found him. I got cancer. But tonight I have realized that the cancer is not in my body, it’s in my soul. I have decided to forgive him and I ask your prayers for help.” We laid hands on him, anointed

him with oil, and rebuked the spirit of cancer. That night he left an entirely different man, spiritually and physically. After returning to the hospital, the medical staff were astounded to find that the roots had totally disappeared, and that the vicious tumour had become benign.

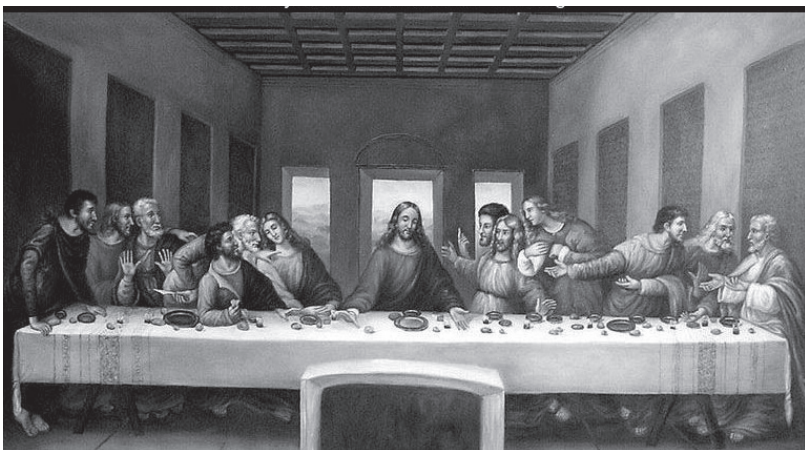
Jeff became the most wonderful servant of God for the rest of his many days on this earth.

Truly, when you remove the face of your enemy from the canvas

of your life, God immediately paints the most beautiful portrait of Jesus on your soul. There is no better place to start than by praying this prayer:

“Father, forgiveness isn’t natural; it’s supernatural. Remove this cancer from me, from the Body of Christ, and then from the world. Let my heart be pure and clean of all bitterness. Make me more and more like Jesus, who shared from his heart, ‘Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.’ Amen.”

will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.” (John 14:23) And then, how can we know that what we are hearing is the voice of God? The message will agree with scripture, with the wisdom shared by others, with our conscience, and with the circumstances God orders in our lives. God is more than ready to confirm what he tells us. So, let us be like Samuel, and say with all confidence, “Speak, for your servant is listening!” And let us believe with all assurance that he will. Amen.



God wants people to
BE with Him before He
wants them to DO
for Him.

Believe It in Order to See It

Rev. Joseph K. Acton, *Sharing Magazine*, March 2014

I had heard about the 'holy laughter' associated with the famous Toronto Blessings. Like others, I had a few preconceived notions about incidences of apparently hysterical laughter occurring when people were filled with the Holy Spirit. Then in 1999, as God would have it, I attended a Pastor's Conference at the Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship, where I was prayed for in a line; after which I found myself along with several hundred others 'resting in the Spirit.'

Perhaps you too may have been filled to overflowing by the power of the Spirit, and entered that place of transcendent rest. A peace comes upon the person being prayed for, and the power of the Spirit gently saturates them as they fall or lie down, where they just rest and marinate in the presence of the Lord. I think perhaps it is God's special blessing for 'Type A' personalities. He simply wants us to stop, rest, let go, and let him love us.

So, there I was resting on the floor, doing 'carpet time' as they say, in a line of several hundred people also resting after having received prayer. I was so deeply relaxed and at peace that for a long time I didn't move or pay attention to anything, other than the wonderful presence of the Holy Spirit all over me and within me. Next to me was a woman in her eighties, who had come to the conference from Germany. I will call her Anna. As I rested, I heard Anna next to me gently thanking the Lord in a mixture of English and German. During the resting and receiving in the Spirit, I heard the most delightful giggle coming from little Anna. I could

tell she was trying to hold it back, but that made her giggle all the more. I smiled. She then started to release the most wonderful laughter. It made me giggle. The more I tried not to laugh, the more I began laughing. There was so much humour and joy in that moment. I laughed as

I thought something like, "God is here with us! He loves us! How incredibly funny and obvious!" Alternating waves of joy and peace washed over me. Then the dam broke, and laughter began to fill the auditorium, from the stage in front to the very back, like a giant wave of joy crashing over us and releasing us from burdens as it washed away all tension and anxiety. The Spirit was ministering to each of us in a very personal way, but common to all was the sense of joy and hilarity. Later that night, as I heard the many testimonies of emotional and physical healing, I thought to myself, "How could you not be healed by that divine presence!?"

Back on the floor Anna and I became pals. Every time we looked at each other, we started laughing, splashing about in the oil of gladness. After that first night I didn't see Anna again until the very last day. She was sitting at a table in the hotel restaurant where I was eating a hamburger. I went over to her and noticed she was wearing those large protective sunglasses they give people who have had a medical procedure performed on their eyes. I knew something was really wrong. I asked her what happened, and she said she had an infection in both her eyes following recent cataract surgery. She could not see. She took off her glasses briefly to show me the damage.



Her eyes were closed and swollen, and the lids were very red. Poor Anna was really hurting, and her battered eyes were excruciatingly sensitive to light. She looked so disappointed as she slowly put the eyewear back on. She said her husband,

who was in the golf store next door, had to lead her around "like a little schnauzer!" She felt awful that she had had to miss most of the conference; however, the joy she experienced that first night had carried her through an uncomfortable stay in a downtown hospital. I could tell she was pretty shaken up by this setback. I was about to say my farewells when I got a very strong sense of wanting to pray for her. I fought it at first. Back then I would normally have been extremely reticent to pray right there in public. Like many Anglicans, I genuinely thought 'appropriateness' was a fruit of the Spirit. But thankfully my own experience a few nights before had imparted a wonderful new boldness, and I was willing to be 'inappropriate' for the cause of Jesus my Lord. So I asked, "Can I pray for you here?" She smiled and said, "I wish you would."

As I prayed, I envisioned stories in Scripture in which Jesus healed the blind. I imagined the joy on the face of the beggar Bartimaeus that day on the side of the road. How desperate and yet how radiant he was as he knelt before Jesus. The Lord said, "What do you want?" Bartimaeus replied, "I want to see!" And so it was. I imagined the light that filled Bartimaeus was now filling my friend Anna even as I prayed.

As I stood there in the restaurant, with my hands laid on her head, I thought how Jesus wanted Bartimaeus healed, perhaps even more than Bartimaeus wanted it himself. It became so clear to me that Jesus only does what he sees the Father doing, and wants only what the Father wants. So I believed that just as Jesus wanted to heal all who came to him, it must be true that Father God wants this blessing as well. At that instant, he willed to heal Anna. Here is the key – God's will is an absolute, a done deal, for all who believe God's will trumps every other outcome. By faith, I began to think of Anna's healing as a done deal. The remainder of my prayer was not "Lord please heal Anna," but "Thank you Father for the healing that Anna is receiving now!" I then spoke those words out loud, as, for a mustard seed of a moment, I really did believe it. Healing was happening, and I said so. I didn't know what kind of healing she would receive, but I knew it was happening as I prayed.

After an extended time of spoken and silent prayer, I opened my eyes and noticed all these people in the room looking at us. I also noticed tears on Anna's cheeks. What happened next

was truly one of the best experiences of my life. She slowly took off her protective sunglasses and opened her eyes. Anna jumped up from the table and said loudly, "God did it!" She then ran around the table to hug me. There were no signs of swelling or redness in or around her eyes. What was obvious was that she could see perfectly. There was no pain – not the slightest bit. She ran out of the restaurant, leaving me there with the onlookers. Did I mention she was in her eighties? There, alone with the observers, I sort of shrugged, looked at my shoes and praised God. I wanted to weep for joy. She rushed back through the door, dragging her husband, Carl, to meet me. They both were laughing and hugging each other.

I have to tell you, this kind of thing doesn't happen to me every day. As I write this, I catch myself being amazed that it even happened then. But that isn't the Kingdom perspective. I shouldn't be amazed it happened, for Jesus promised this would be the ordinary experience of those who believe. From that moment on, I have felt very much a part of a larger healing plan God has for all of us, both to heal us as individuals, and to use us as agents of healing. This is the promise for all of us, 'ordinary Christians' though we may think ourselves. In that moment of healing, it all seemed very obvious: God loves us and wants us well. He calls us and sends us to proclaim the simple reality that his power makes people whole. Please don't think I have had constant success in the healing ministry. I have had more occasions where healing didn't occur than when it did, at least in the way I prayed it would. People have stayed blind. People have even died. But I trust you will agree that one 'Anna' is motivation indeed to keep on praying. And most importantly, whoever we pray for always receives emotional, physical, and spiritual benefit. For me, that by itself is enough to make healing a front-and-centre ministry of the church. But the best reason for it to be so is that Jesus commanded it, "Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give." Let it be so!

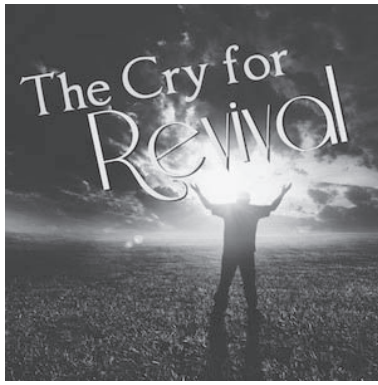
"We may want to examine Jesus' teaching from every angle to determine whether we should obey it or not, but the Scripture tells us that we must start with obedience if we want to understand God's will. The path toward maturity is not more knowledge, but choosing to do what is plainly written. This is how we come into a true knowledge of God."

(Anon.)

KEYS TO REVIVAL

Intercessors for New Zealand

It's so easy for us to pray for our will to be realised, rather than for God's will to be done on earth as it is in Heaven. In terms of our own needs, or even in terms of revival in the church, our focus can be on the problems that need to be sorted out, rather than on the coming of God's kingdom. There is a difference, a great difference. Jesus, our model, only did what he saw his Father doing. He only did his Father's will, setting his own aside: "Not my will but thine be done." (Luke 22:42) For us to follow in his footsteps, our success depends upon being led by his Spirit, especially when we are praying. For any other dependence, Jeremiah 17:9 tells us the unpalatable truth that our own heart is worse than unreliable, it's deceitful without our even knowing it!



There are times and seasons in the things of God. Sometimes the Spirit would move strongly in one group, or in one part of the world, but if his working is constantly rejected and opposed, or if his people become apathetic, then he will raise up others. God's Spirit responds to a real hunger for him, a longing for his presence, a deep desire to see God glorified and his majesty exalted. To see the Spirit move, we need to be crying out, "Lord, what is your will in my part of the world? May your will be done! May your will be done to the glory of your name, and yours alone! May your will be done through my life, Lord!"

God will move sovereignly as he chooses, in his time and in his way. However, we who seek to do what the Scriptures teach

can prepare ourselves for his moving in our lives. To that end, the following verses emphasise the relationship we are to have with the Spirit of God.

Keep on being filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18)

Pray that God will fill you with his Spirit. Then keep in a right relationship with him so that you are constantly filled. Pray

for this!

Walk in the Spirit (Romans 8:4)

Walk according to God's Word and his on-going directions to you, day-by-day, minute-by-minute. Pray for this!

Pray in the Holy Spirit at all times (Ephesians 6:18)

Be led by God as you pray; not merely expressing your own desires and ideas, but truly being led by the One who knows everything. Pray for this!

Worship in Spirit and Truth (John 4:23-24)

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal his truth to you, and to enable you to worship God in the Spirit, as he desires and deserves to be worshipped. Ask for this!

"Ask, and you will receive ..." (Matthew 7:7)

"You need to learn to live your life for an audience of one, Jesus Christ."

Rick Warren

Intimacy - God and Me

Sue Rowe, Hamilton House of Prayer

"Father, you call me to love you, to be one with you, to be your friend as Abraham was. You call me to meet with you face to face, in intimacy and in trust, so that you can confide your intentions to me, as you did to him.

Father, your desire is that I know you, and that I wait in the greatest anticipation for you, listening for your sound, to meet with you as Adam and Eve did in the cool of the day in the Garden of Eden.

Abba Father, captivate me, draw me to yourself for times of precious fellowship, for times of the most intimate communion. Draw me to sit at your feet, as Mary sat at the feet of your Son; let time stand still while I focus on your beauty, listen to your words, and hear the voice of my beloved. Revive me so your heart and mine beat as one; so I count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of you, Christ Jesus my Lord. O that I may be found in you! For this, I press on, reaching forward to those things which are ahead, responding to the highest calling known to man - the call to oneness with you, the Living God!

Lord, in humility I submit to you. I resist the devil and all his efforts to distract, delay and discourage me from times of intimacy with you. He must flee from me!

Lord, reveal any walls that I have erected between us. Expose any hidden, sinful attitudes of my heart which hinder me from pleasing you. Show me any worldly wells I am drinking from, and am seeking satisfaction from, instead of from the fountain of living water. I will have no other god, only you Lord God!

I will dwell in your secret place, O Most High, abiding under your shadow, Almighty God. I will trust in you. I have made you, the Most High God, my refuge, my dwelling place. You will deliver me; you will set me on high, because I know your name and I honour your name. When I call upon you, you will answer me.

This day I choose intimacy, for in your presence there is fullness of joy. Set me as a seal upon your heart; as I set you as a seal upon my heart. Amen."

(James 2:23; Deuteronomy 34:10; Genesis 3:8-10; Luke 10:39; Song of Songs 2:8; Philippians 3:8-14; James 4:7; John 7:38; Exodus 20:3; Psalm 91:1,2,15; Psalm 16:11; Song of Songs 8:6-7)



Set Free

Les Facooory, The Encourager, August 2014



Lord, why do people look and stare at me as if I am weird? Is it because they see my body bent and twisted? You created this body of mine, just like theirs, in your own image, Lord. Even though I cannot speak and tell them how I feel, but through my big smile I can show them your wonderful love for them.

Lord, how can I tell them about your wonderful love when I cannot use my voice? Let me use my big smile when they say your name out loud! Then I can show them how much I love you. I know how much you love me, Lord, because you came to die for my sins. I hear your wonderful voice every day of my life. You speak to my soul and tell me that I am so special to you. And I know of your love for me, and I am not afraid any more because you will always be there for me.

One day soon, my soul will be set free and I will soar like the eagles on the wind. Then I will be set free from this bent and twisted body. My new body will be made perfect because it will be like yours, O Lord! So Lord, I will wait on you to come and take me home in your loving arms. Then I will be set free indeed to live in your kingdom forever.

Amen!

It's All About Jesus

Intercessors for New Zealand

"Some Greeks were part of the group going up to Jerusalem to worship at the Feast, and they came to Philip and said to him, 'Sir, we want to see Jesus.'" (John 12:20-21)

"The ultimate in the Christian faith isn't just confessing the right Creed, believing the correct set of doctrines, or even worshipping; it's having a relationship with Jesus Christ, our Lord, the one to whom we are disciples, the one whom we follow." Jesus said to a number of people, "Come, follow me!" Some did, others didn't, for a number of reasons. As we, members of Jesus' church, seek to share, let us share about Jesus - about who He is, what he taught, how he lived, died and rose again, and how any person who would see him can become his follower.

Pray for all Christians to freely, openly and unashamedly share with people who are not yet Jesus' followers, how we came to follow him, what he means to us, and what we mean to him.

Pray for all ministries and churches which are sharing the Good News, that we will focus on the One who brings Good News - Jesus, our Saviour and Lord.

Pray that God will help us not to argue doctrine or theology, but that we will simply say to people who want to see Jesus, "This is the way - He is the Way!"

"People with sore and bruised hearts don't usually need theology, they need loving sympathy and sincere, kindly friendship."

(The Vine)

We Too Must Endure

Based on the writings of John Borman, Faith for Daily Living

"You have observed ... my endurance." (2 Tim 3:10 GNB)

Paul faced many hardships, dangers, difficulties and setbacks; but, through the strength and empowerment of the Holy Spirit, Christ had made him all but indestructible.

Timothy had stood alongside the older apostle in some of those experiences, and had begun to acquire that same quality of endurance. This was more than just hanging in grimly when adversity struck. It was a world away from sitting back and bearing things quietly. It involved taking hold of circumstances that were unfavourable, and turning them around until something positive and of lasting value was derived from them. And so for us,

A SMOOTH SEA
NEVER MADE
A SKILLED SAILOR



endurance means that instead of accepting life's ups and downs, we actively master and use them both for the glory of God.

You can find yourself facing all kinds of adverse circumstances: ill health can afflict you, lack of finance can frustrate you,

unfair criticism can depress you, opposition and conflict can overwhelm you. At the very lowest any person has ever been, Jesus took his crucifixion and made it the most momentous event in human history. While we can't come near to that, we can aspire to follow his example. Make this paraphrase of Colossians 1:11 your prayer, "May I be strengthened with all power, according to your glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy. Amen."

Am I a Disciple?

The Daily Bible Verse, Caesar Kalinowski, GraceNYC.org

"Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.'" (Matthew 28:18-19)

If we have put our hope and trust in Jesus, then we have become

his disciples; it is our new identity. A disciple isn't some special class of Christian, just as discipleship isn't a series of topics or classes that we work through. A disciple is someone who has reoriented his or her life around

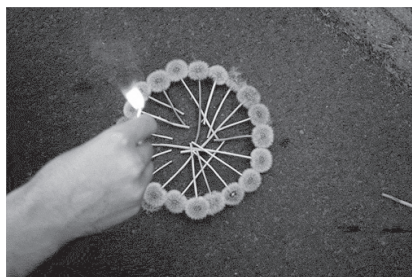


another, to become, in essence, who that other person is. At the heart of being a disciple of Jesus is a desire to become one with him, and to be transformed into his likeness. If you were honest, would you say that more than anything else right now, you are pursuing being a disciple of Jesus? If so, your

heart and character are being transformed into his likeness in every area of your life. If not, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal what discipleship means, and ask him to lead you deeper into the life of Christ.

Love's Chain Reaction

Love is the spark that kindles the fire of compassion...
Compassion is the fire that lights the candle of service...
Service is the candle that ignites the torch of hope...
Hope is the torch that lights the beacon of faith...
Faith is the beacon that reflects the power of God...
God is the One who creates the miracle of love!



May we learn to be more content with Jesus than with answers.

Dave Whitehead

HOW TO ORDER

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Financial Update

We continue to thank God for the provision he has made, and is making, through the generosity of his faithful saints. Our finances are stable, enabling us to plan for the next edition. We look forward to producing our regular 4 editions a year for as long as God's benediction remains upon our ministry. Please let us know if you can distribute more copies of Wholeness than at present, or if you know of others who would like to receive their copy personally.

"WHOLENESS"

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Remembering Jesus

The Vine Today



"He took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body which is given for you. Do this in memory of me.'" (Luke 22:19)

There is something very tender in the thought of the Lord's Supper as a memorial. We all know the value of mementoes in keeping in mind someone whom we cannot see in person. One morning a young man sat in his pastor's office and pulled a letter from his pocket, saying that he had just heard from his sister far away overseas. He opened the letter and showed the minister some little pressed flowers and dried grass-blades. The young man's voice was choked with emotion as he said, "These flowers and grass blades are from my mother's grave in England." The little memorials brought back the whole life of his mother; and the son sat there and spoke most affectionately of her love, her beauty of spirit, her sacrifices, then of her death. So it is that the memorials of the Last Supper recall to our forgetful hearts the sacred scene in the upper room, which was so soon to be followed by that most heart-rending, earth-shattering of events, our Lord's crucifixion.

But simply remembering is not enough. The memory must kindle love, and it must keep us faithful. Another young man was about to go abroad for a long journey. Just before he left, his father took his watch from his pocket. On the dial were pictures of himself and his wife. "Take this watch," said the father, "and carry it with you in all of your travels. Every time you look to see the hour, the eyes of your father and mother will look up into yours. When you see our faces, remember that we are thinking of you and praying for you. Do not go anywhere you would not want us to go with you. Do nothing you would not want us to see." In the Last Supper, Jesus has given us his own picture of his broken body, of his shed blood. He wants us to remember him and to be faithful.

"... the Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took a piece of bread, gave thanks to God, broke it, and said, 'This is my body, which is for you. Do this in memory of me.' In the same way, after the supper he took the cup and said, 'This cup is God's new covenant, sealed with my blood. Whenever you drink it, do so in memory of me.' This means that every time you eat this bread and drink from this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." (1 Cor. 11:23-26)

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