

Remember!

Joe Slater

Things that are important to us stick in our minds. Most of us remember our phone number, address, and birthday. We need that information, so we discipline ourselves to remember it. Such things, however, pale in comparison to the most important event in history.

What could be more important to you as a Christian than Jesus' death on your behalf? As Jesus taught us, we commemorate His death upon the first day of each week. Giving them bread to remind them of His body, Jesus told His disciples to eat it *"in remembrance of Me."* Likewise, the fruit of the vine would remind them (and us) of His blood; thus we drink it *"in remembrance of Me."*

Let us remember that it was Jesus, the Son of God, who gave His body and blood on Calvary for us. Neither God the Father nor the Holy Spirit has ever had a body of flesh and blood. Jesus, when He left the glory of Heaven to come to this earth to save us, took upon Himself human flesh.

This does not mean that the Father and Holy Spirit played no part in our redemption, for assuredly they did! But it was Jesus Whose body and blood were offered, which is what we are remembering in the Lord's Supper. The bread reminds us not of the Father's body (for He has none), but of Jesus' body; the fruit of the vine reminds us not of the Father's blood (for He has none), but of Jesus' blood.

As we break the bread each Lord's Day, let us remember the agony Jesus endured for us as the cruel soldiers beat Him beyond recognition, and as they pounded the spikes through His hands and feet. *"He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our*

iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5).

As we drink the cup, let us remember Jesus' blood, the *"blood of the new covenant which is shed (literally "poured out") for many for the remission of sins"* (Matthew 26:28). May we always say with the apostle John, *"To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood . . . to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen"* (Revelation 1:5, 6).

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The Path Jesus Chooses For Us

Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. (Mark 6:45, ESV).

In the world of our imagination, if Jesus leads us, if he causes us to go by a certain path, that path is sure to lead to success. We expect happiness, peace, and satisfaction when we are following our Lord.

But what did the disciples experience when the Lord "made" them get into the boat and proceed toward Bethsaida? The wind was against them and they made headway "painfully" (Mark 6:48).

Our Lord loves us with an everlasting love (Psalm 103:17; Jeremiah 31:3). His love is not focused on our short-term happiness but on our long-term holiness. He is not a soft leader who strives to make everything easy, safe, and fun for his disciples. He may at times lead us through fire and water (Psalm 66:11-12). These trials are not pleasant at the time, *"but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it"* (Hebrews 12:11).

Are we disciples of Jesus? If so, let us remember that those who follow a leader end up where that leader ended. In the case of Jesus, that means the right hand of God eventually, but first there will be a cross to carry and a hill called Golgotha to climb.

--Thayer Salisbury (Toledo, OH)

IMPOSSIBLE SILENCE

Should a person keep his religion to himself? Do you consider it "bad form" to talk about religion?

Most of us, at one time or another, have had to deal with someone who used little tact in their approach. To put it mildly, they were obnoxious! So, perhaps then and there, we decided that from now on we would be silent about our Christianity.

If that has been our choice, we have made a big mistake. Why? Because that's incompatible with being a Christian. We have our marching orders from Jesus, and they involve teaching all nations – something the early Christians did with enthusiasm. Being silent was not, and is not, an option (Matthew 28:18-20).

The apostles had to deal with authorities who told them *"not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus."* Obey man or God? That was the question. God said speak; man said be silent. Do you remember their response? *"But Peter and John answered them, 'Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge; for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard'"* (Acts 4:19-20).

We should be thankful for their decision. As H.G. Wells once said, "The trouble with so many people is that the voice of their neighbors sounds louder in their ears than the voice of God."

Remember the conduct of the early Christians when they were being persecuted for their faith. They were scattered abroad, but they were not silent. They *"went about preaching the word"* (Acts 8:4). We, too, need to understand that we are associated with God in a divine purpose, and *"we cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard."*

--John Gipson (Little Rock, AR) via Buchanan Dam, TX