

## **SERMON: CHRISTMAS, CALVARY, AND COMMUNION**

**John 1:14 & 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 11: 24-25**

### **John 1:14**

**And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.**

### **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 11:24-25**

**(24) And when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.**

**(25) After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.**

### **Introduction**

Several thoughts come to mind as we ponder these two related Scriptures. The first thought is reflected in a saying used often in the business world: "Start with the end in mind." There are steps to achieving a goal, but in the process it is easy to forget what you are really trying to achieve. If we are not careful, the means can become more important than the end. You have heard of the proverbial story of the man who bought swamp land with the intentions of draining it and building a residential subdivision on it and in the process becoming a very wealthy man. However, he became so preoccupied with fighting the alligators that he never drained the swamp and never built the subdivision. Getting rid of the alligators was just a means to draining the swamp. Draining the swamp was a means to building the subdivision. Let's keep it real, sometimes life is just like that. We never drain the swamp because there are so many alligators after us. We become an alligator hunter rather than a real estate developer.

God has never forgotten the end of His redemptive work. Before there was a sinner, God had a plan of salvation for sinners. Christmas is just one part – a very important part - of His redemptive process.

The second thought is reflected by an aphorism attributed to Aristotle: "The whole is greater than the sum of the parts." When individual components or events are combined to create a whole, the resulting entity or event is more valuable, more impactful, or more powerful than the sum of the individual parts. You can hear the ***Hallelujah Chorus*** and

appreciate it. It can be performed alone and make sense. However, if you hear it with the rest of Handel's *Messiah*, it is much more powerful. In the original work it comes after the resurrection. It is a celebration of our Savior's resurrection.

You can hear a recording of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s *I Have A Dream* speech. It can stand alone and make perfect sense. However, when you know the context of the march on Washington in 1963, it becomes even more powerful.

This principle is true of corporate worship. The individual elements, prayer, Scripture reading, vocal and instrumental music, and preaching the Word are great individually. Yet, together they become much more powerful. This is why corporate worship is so important. Corporate worship proves that the whole is indeed greater than the sum of the parts.

Christmas, Calvary, and communion when spiritually taken together become powerful to all believers. Christmas points to Calvary. Communion reminds us of Calvary and the commitment and obedience of Christ. There could be no Calvary without Christmas. There would be no communion observance without Calvary. Together they become a powerful spiritual triad.

On this communion Sunday of Advent let's look at these three events and see how they are spiritually linked. Let's connect the sacred dots.

## **Exposition**

### **1. He Took On A Body – Incarnation & Visualization.**

(The Word Made Itself Flesh.)

(We Beheld His Glory.)

(A Picture Is Worth A Thousand Words.)

(Christ Is The Living Word.)

(Christmas Celebrates The Incarnation.)

### **2. He Sacrificed His Body – Dedication & Humiliation.**

(He Gave His Life For Us.)

(Crucifixion Was The Most Horrible And Humiliating Way To Die.)

(Communion Celebrates - In A Solemn Way - The Sacrifice.)

### **3. He Emptied His Body – Salvation & Reconciliation.**

(He Shed His Blood For Us.)

(His Blood Was Sinless.)

(He Was The Lamb Without Blemish.)

(Communion Celebrates - In A Solemn Way - The Emptying.)

### **Closing Thoughts**

Christ has given us so much. Now it is our turn to give to Him. What can we give the One who gave His all? We can give Him our hearts and our lives for His service. We can each be true to Romans 12:1-2 and present our bodies a living sacrifice which is holy and acceptable to our loving God. We can be true to 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:19 and realize that our bodies are the true temples and that the Spirit of God dwells in each believer and our thoughts, attitudes, and actions should not frustrate the Spirit. Temples are places of worship; we should constantly be in a worshipful mindset and worshipful “Spirit-set.”

Give God Glory! Give God All The Glory!

### **End Note**

Now back to the idea of starting and keeping the end in mind. Jesus is the perfect example. He kept the end in mind when He was tempted by the devil. He did not compromise His principles and turn stones to bread to satisfy a selfish temporary physical need. He did not bow down to acquire the kingdoms of this world. He did not jump from the temple to prove a useless point or make a spectacle of Himself. In Gethsemane He kept the end in mind and complied with the Father’s will and went to the cross. Thank God, Jesus kept the end - our salvation - constantly in His mind. If you did not shout during the sermon, you can shout while reading this end note.

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