**Special Presentation**

Psalm 41; John 13:25-30

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**Jordan:** All right, let’s pray. Heavenly Father, You have revealed Yourself to us in Your word as a God who upholds, directs, disposes and governs all creatures, all actions and all things, from the greatest even to the least. And yet You are also a God who reveals to us that it is Your desire for us to bring our prayers to You. And so we bring our prayers to You this morning, Lord, for Bruce and for Becky. We know that it is in Your providence that he is going through the trials that he is going through. But we ask, Lord, that You would show mercy to him. And we ask that through these trials that You would bring him into a closer dependence on You. And so we pray that You would be with him and that You would be with Becky, that You would strengthen them both in their faith through this.

Lord, we also ask that You would be with us this morning as we consider Your word. We ask that You would reveal Yourself to us, Lord, and that in knowing You better it would lead to loving You more and loving others more. I pray this in Your Son’s name. Amen.

**Brave Men:** Amen.

**Jordan:** **Jordan:** Okay. It’s been a while since I’ve been up here. And when I took a look back at my notes I realized that it’s been a year-and-a-half since I first did a talk about improving our participation in the Lord’s Supper.

Since that time we also spent some time going through the Psalms and sharing with you some of my favorite stories in the Gospels. Would you believe it? I found a way to combine all three of those into one topic this morning, which I’ve entitled “Improving Our Participation in the Lord’s Supper Part 2,” based on a Gospel story which references a Psalm. And so that’s what we’ll look at today.

But before we get into the meat of it, I think it’s always important to start off with an exhortation, which is that hopefully we learn things today. But if all we do is learn and it doesn’t lead to anything, then we’re missing the point of learning. And so I’m curious to know if you’ve heard of the three-legged stool analogy when it comes to the Christian life. Has anybody heard of the three-legged stool and what makes up the three legs?

**Don Maurer:** Well, I’ve heard it in a negative way. Maybe not negatively, but I’ve heard that the three-legged stool refers to Scripture, tradition and experience.

**Jordan:** That’s pretty close to what I have: Bible doctrine, godly practice and Christian experience. And so if any of those three are lacking in your Christian life, or if you are a person who tends to elevate one more than another, your stool is likely to topple.

I come from a denomination that likes to get very heady with theological topics. You know us as the Reformed Presbyterians, right?

**Ted Wood:** That surprises me. *(Laughter)*

**Jordan:** Yes. And it’s the temptation of our denomination to be so concerned about Biblical doctrine that we sacrifice godly practice for Christian experience.

My wife comes from a Pentecostal background. In her church they are very much focused on the experience they have as Christians. But that may come at the expense of Biblical doctrine. And certainly godly practice is that faith without works is dead.. And so we have the head, the hands and the heart here, and we need to be exercising all three.

And so it is certainly my hope today to help exercise your heads while we look at Scripture. But my exhortation to you is to allow that to be something that turns into godly practice and Christian experience.

And so this is good. Given that it has been a year-and-a-half I need to mention why I think it’s important that we spend time thinking about how it is that we should be preparing for and receiving the Lord’s Supper. And so I’m just going to very quickly share a couple of things that come from the *Westminster Confession of Faith* about this sacrament.

This is kind of a high-level summary. The first point is that sacraments, when rightly used, contain the promise of benefit to worthy receivers. So rightly used they contain a benefit. And what I’m getting at is that if we’re taking the Lord’s Supper because it’s what Christians do and I’m a Christian, we are falling woefully short of what can be received by taking the Lord’s Supper. It is more than just a thing we do because we’re Christians; it has a benefit to us. And so if we’re not experiencing that benefit then we might not be using it rightly.

The Westminster Standards continue to go on to say what some of those benefits are. Some of those are spiritual nourishment and growth in Him. And yet it is food; it is food and drink.

If you are on a long journey, and you are tired and you are thirsty, you will be refreshed by having food and drink. The journey that we are on in this life is the Christian pilgrimage. It is full of trials. It is full of persecutions and things like that.

The Lord’s Supper is our nourishment in this Christian life. And so if we’re not receiving that nourishment and we’re not being refreshed when we take it, we may not be taking it rightly. And so if we are taking it rightly, the Westminster Standards give us some additional help as far as how it is that we can do that.

Hopefully I can run through these fast. I can share these slides with Don afterwards if you would like to have them. You are certainly welcome to take notes. But I can show the slides afterwards.

So some of the things that the Westminster Standards say that are involved in rightly taking the sacrament are: examining yourself before you come, forgiving those who have done you wrong before you come, renewing the exercise of these graces of repentance and your desire for God, and doing this through serious meditation and fervent prayer.

I’m inclined to say that I think that we as a people generally don’t do this well. I think a lot of us show up at church. Maybe we find out that the Lord’s Supper is happening that day and we take it. And I’m not necessarily saying that God through His Spirit can’t provide the benefits when it’s taken that way. But what I am saying is that when we take it rightly I think we can maximize the benefits that are intended for the sacrament. And so my hope today is to give you just a little more of the practical understanding of how it is that I prepare for the Lord’s Supper when I take it.

I’m just going through a recent preparation that I had done, and something that I had learned that just struck me so much about who God is and how He reveals Himself through His word that I didn’t want to keep it to myself. And so for the rest of today it’s going to be a little bit about showing you a recent example of how I’ve been preparing myself for the Lord’s Supper.

And so what I have done is that our church celebrates it the first Sunday of every month, and I know that day is coming. And so usually the week leading up to that Sunday, in my daily devotions I try to spend time thinking about preparing for the Lord’s Supper. And a few months past, one of the things I decided to do was to read through the Gospel accounts of where the Lord Himself instituted the Lord’s Supper. So on the night of Passover read through what the Gospels say happened that night. That’s just a way for me to be preparing for that sacrament.

And one of the things that I noticed as I went is that only three of the Gospel accounts actually recount the institution of the Lord’s Supper: Matthew 26, Mark 14 and Luke 22. These are the Synoptic Gospels.

And as you would expect, there would be similarities between them; that’s why they’re the Synoptics. One of the things that caught me about the similarities is that as they are describing this there are two main things that you see in both of these.

The first one is betrayal. So we see that someone will betray Christ. And the second thing we see is that the person who will betray Christ is someone close to Him. And so according to Christ in two of the Gospels, *“the one who has dipped his hand in the dish with Me;* that’s how close we are; we dip into the same dish.” And In Luke we see that *“his hand is with Me at the table.”* So it’s betrayal from someone extremely close to Christ.

Now I mentioned that John does not have an account of the institution of the Lord’s Supper. Actually he doesn’t mention the Lord’s Supper at all. But it does tell stories of what happened the same night that aren’t recorded in Matthew, Mark or Luke. And that one particular story is the washing of the feet of the disciples, only found in John.

Interestingly, after Jesus washes their feet we see them reclining at the table. And while they recline at the table, even though the Lord’s Supper is not mentioned, we see *“Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me. It is he to whom I will give this morsel of bread when I have dipped it.”* And so again we see betrayal from someone close to Him.

Now when Jesus is washing their feet, before the table He tells them again that someone will betray Him; this is in verse 18. *“But so the Scripture will be fulfilled: ‘He who ate My bread has lifted his heel against Me.’”* Again, the eating of the bread and betrayal.

But what I found particularly interesting as I was reading through this in preparation was not so much the betrayal and the eating of the bread, but what we see at the start of verse 18: that the Scripture will be fulfilled. And I said to myself, “What Scripture?” I don’t think I had ever noticed or thought to look before. Why is it that we keep seeing “someone who has dipped the bread with Me” in all four of the Gospels, and only John says that the Scripture will be fulfilled?

And so I went into my study Bible to look for the reference, hoping that the editor had put it in there, which he faithfully did. And the Scripture that is referenced is Psalm 41 verse 9:

*“Even My close friend in whom I trusted, who ate My bread,*

*Has lifted his heel against Me.”*

Once again, betrayal with someone who is close to Jesus, having eaten bread with Him.

Now I feel like we can pause right there and just say, “How awesome is God!” These Psalms were written a thousand years earlier. David wrote this a thousand years before the events of the Last Supper. If you’re a person who makes your decisions based on logic, how could you logically not say that this is from God? We have a prophecy a thousand years later that is fulfilled so specifically in the Gospels. To me that’s just amazing! My heart swells up inside of me going, yeah; the God I believe in is really God! To me that’s amazing! Yes, Don?

**Don:** I think it’s also important to point out the heinousness of Judas’ sin. When you consider the breaking of bread, going to someone’s house to eat with them, at that time in the Middle East—and maybe it’s still that way today,--you know that someone thinks very highly of you eating bread with you, if you’re invited to their place for dinner, or something like that. Here is Judas in that position of intimacy, committing that crime.

**Jordan:** Sure. Even if you look in John just before this, where Christ washes their feet, again you have that intimacy.

**Don:** Yes.

**Jordan:** So anyway, as I was preparing myself for the Lord’s Supper this week, and I noticed this connection between the Lord’s Supper and Psalm 41, I thought that as part of my preparation why don’t I try to study Psalm 41, and see what else there is to learn from this? And so my deductive reasoning kind of went along the lines of this premise:

1. If we are to prepare ourselves to take the Lord’s Supper, and premise 2., that Psalm 41 was on the mind of Christ the night that the Lord’s Supper was instituted, then my conclusion was that Psalm 41 can be a helpful Scripture to aid in our preparation to take the Lord’s Supper.

Now this is not a debate. So if you don’t agree with my reasoning here, so be it. I do have 2 Timothy 3:16 on my side, which says that *“all Scripture is profitable.”* *(Laughter)* So I’ll just say that from the beginning as you prepare for the Lord’s Supper.

I thought that what I would do this morning is to share what I found particularly from two preparation helps that come from Psalm 41. The first one is using Psalm 41 to view ourselves. And the second is using Psalm 41 to view Christ. And actually before we start, let me read Psalm 41; that would be good for us to do. So I’ll go ahead and read it for us here.

*“To the Choir Master. A Psalm of David.*

*Blessed is the one who considers the poor;*

*In the day of trouble the LORD delivers him;*

*The LORD protects him and keeps him alive.*

*He is called blessed in the land;*

*You do not give him up to the will of his enemies.*

*The LORD sustains him on his sickbed;*

*In his illness He restores him to full health.*

*As for Me I said:*

*‘O LORD, be gracious to me;*

*Heal me, for I have sinned against You.*

*Moy enemies say of me in malice,*

*“When will he die, and his name perish?” ‘And when one comes to see me he utters empty words,*

*While his heart gathers iniquity.’*

*When he goes out, he tells it abroad.*

*All who hate me whisper together about me;*

*They imagine the worst for me.*

*They say, ‘A deadly thing has poured out on him;*

*He will not rise again from where he lies.’*

*Even My close friend in whom I trusted, who ate My bread,*

*Has lifted up his heel against Me.*

*But You, O LORD, be gracious to me and raise me up,*

*That I may repay them.*

*By this I know that You delight in me:*

*My enemy will not shout in triumph over me.*

*But You have upheld me because of my integrity,*

*And set me in Your presence forever.*

*Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting!*

*Amen and Amen!”*

Now before I begin to get into some specifics about viewing ourselves, I did want to mention one thing that I noticed as I was reading this. When we were talking through the Psalms last year I mentioned that there was a form to the Psalms. For instance we see that there are five books. And at the end of each of the first five books. And at the end of each of the first five books you see a blessing. So Psalm 41 is the end of Book 1. And in your Bibles you may see at some place that you have a heading: Book Two. So at the end of Psalm 41 we see a blessing.

*“Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting!”*

However, our Psalm also has a blessing in the first verse:

*“Blessed be the man who considers the poor.”*

In Book 1 of the Psalms, the first 41 chapters, there are only three Psalms that have a blessing at the beginning: Psalm 1, Psalm 32 and Psalm 41. Psalm 1: “Blessed be the man who delights in the LORD.” Psalm 32: “Blessed be the man whose sins are forgiven,” and Psalm 41: “Blessed is the one who considers the poor.”

Now you all know that I like the Westminster Standards. *(Laughter)* In Question 171, which asks how we should prepare to receive the Lord’s Supper, we’re told these concepts for preparing. *“We should prepare by examining ourselves of our being in Christ and our love to God.”* Psalm 1: *“Blessed is the man who delights in the law of the LORD”; being in Christ and our love to God.*

We’re also told that we should examine ourselves *“of our sins and our wants, and the measure of our knowledge, faith and repentance.”* Psalm 32: *“Blessed is the man whose sins are forgiven.”*

And when we prepare we are also told that we should *“examine ourselves of our love to our brethren, our charity to all men, and forgiving those who have done us wrong.”* In Psalm 41: *“Blessed is the one who considers the poor.”*

I love that. I can’t help but share that with you in connection with the Standards and how we should be preparing ourselves, and the Psalms saying that this is the man who is blessed, who has done these things.”

Okay. So that being said, how do we read Psalm 41 to help us to prepare? I think the first help is that if we use Psalm 41 to humble ourselves in preparation for the Lord’s Supper, we are using it rightly.

Now we see in verse 1: *“Blessed is the man who considers the poor,”* and so you might say: Who are the poor? And you don’t have to go far back in the Psalms to get the answer to this. You just go back to the previous chapter, the last verse: Psalm 40, verse 17.

*“As for me, I am poor and needy,*

*But the LORD takes thought for me.”*

And so in humbling ourselves, we need to realize that we are the ones who are poor and needy. And why is it that we are poor and needy? Verse 4 of Psalm 41 tells us this.

*“Be gracious to me;*

*Heal me, for I have sinned against You.”*

It is because of our sin that we are poor and needy, and in need of salvation and in need of Christ. And when we take the Lord’s Supper His death is shown forth in the atonement for our sins. And so when we humble ourselves and realize that we are sinners, and we are poor and needy, I think it helps us to approach the Lord’s Supper in the right way.

Now Don, you had mentioned earlier how heinous it was that Judas betrayed Christ in the way that he did, and certainly it was. And I think we’ve already seen that verse 9:

*“My close friend in whom I trusted*

*Has lifted up his heel against Me,”*

Is certainly a prophecy referring to Judas. But in humbling ourselves I also remind you that in John 15 we read: *“Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.”* And John goes on to say, *“I have called you friends.”*

We are also called the friends of Christ. And we also sin against Him daily through temptations of the flesh, the world and the devil. Certainly this is Judas. But we also have lifted our heels against Christ as friends. And I think that when we approach the Lord’s Supper, humbling ourselves in this way, we have put ourselves in a right mind to better get what the Lord is giving us in the sacrament.

Okay. So let’s turn now to help #2. Sorry Don, you had a—

**Don:** Yeah. It’s very interesting to me how Peter’s sin and Judas’ sin were almost identical. I wouldn’t even say almost; they were identical. It could be argued that Peter’s was more serious than Judas. And the only difference is that Peter was a friend of Christ. Christ had already said to Peter, “When you return, strengthen your brethren.” But you make a really good point. We dare not take our sins lightly. They are just as heinous, though they are forgiven and we are in Christ.

**Jordan:** That’s a good point. Anything else before we continue?

**Ted:** There is a great 15th-century Good Friday hymn:

*“Who was the guilty?*

*Who brought this upon Thee?*

*Alas! My treason,*

*Jesus, hath undone Thee!*

*‘twas I, Lord Jesus; I it was denied Thee:*

*I crucified Thee.”*

**Jordan:** Yep.

**Ted:** You don’t hear that message in a lot of evangelical churches.

**Jordan:** No. I think this is also the reason why we don’t prepare ourselves for the Lord’s Supper as well as we should. Okay, so why don’t we turn to what I believe is help #2 from this Psalm, which is using this Psalm to view Christ. And instead of humbling ourselves, it’s now seeing Christ through this Psalm. And so we already mentioned that verse 1 starts out with this blessing: *“Blessed is the man who considers the poor.”* We are the poor.

But we also see this in 2 Corinthians 8 verse 9: *“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you by His poverty might become rich.”* Clearly Christ is the blessed Man who considers the poor. And being that One who is the blessed One, we continue to see through the end of verse 1 through verse 3 all of these promises that come to Him. I have them listed out here, but you can follow along with these in your Bibles.

*“Blessed is the man who considers the poor;*

*In the day of trouble the LORD delivers him.*

*The LORD protects him;*

*The LORD does not give him up to the will of his enemies.*

*The LORD sustains him on his sickbed;*

*The LORD restores him to full health.”*

And again, I think if we start to see this Psalm as Christ dying for our sins on the cross, we know how comforting it must have been for Him to have this Psalm as a reminder that He was going to be delivered from this death. Death does not have victory over Him.

And so when you read these verses with this in view, we also see a few things in the New Testament. Acts 2:24: *“God raised Him up, reversing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for Him to be held by it. For David says concerning Him: ‘You will not let Your Holy One see corruption.’”*

And 1 Corinthians 15:55 which references Hosea: *“O Death, where is your victory?”* Even though Christ died for us, His enemies did not ultimately have the victory over Him, and God delivered Him from death. And so we can see Christ in these verses in this Psalm as well.

Now I’m going to go down a little bit of a rabbit hole. One of the commentaries that I use when I’m spending time in the Psalms has the verses in the King James translation. And one of the things that I noticed in verse 3 in particular in the King James Version is this. My version, the ESV says:

*“The LORD sustains him on his sickbed;*

*In his illness You restore him to full health.”*

The King James translates it:

*“The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing;*

*Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.”*

And that word “languishing” struck me. It’s a strong word and it’s a unique word; it’s not a word that I hear very often or read very often when I read the Bible.

Some of you might recall that last year I mentioned a tool that’s available to us as an online concordance called:

<http://biblestudytools.com>

And so out of curiosity I went to

<http://biblestudytools.com>

and I wanted to study this word “languishing” a little bit more to see if I could just learn more about it. How else might it be used in Scripture? And then, referencing those other places in Scripture, what are the connections between this Psalm and other things in Scripture?

What I was surprised to find out is that it is only used one other time in Scripture, in the book of Job. So I naturally went to that one reference to see what it was. It’s Job 6 verse 7, and this is Job responding to some of the words of his friends while he is languishing. And the verse says: *“They are as food that is loathsome to me,”* referring to the words of comfort his friends are giving him. “They are as food that is loathsome to me.” That word “loathsome” is that same word.

And I thought: Well, that’s not very remarkable. And I was ready to just pass it off as not much of a connection here at all. But I continued to read in Job. And what I noticed was the very next verse. And the very next verse says:

*“O that I might have my request,*

*And that God would fulfill my hope:*

*That it would please God to crush me!”*

And that is a very remarkable phrase, because the words “crush me” take me immediately to Isaiah 53, which is certainly one of the most well-known passages in the Old Testament, talking about the crucifixion of Christ.

*“He was pierced for our transgressions;*

*He was crushed for our iniquities.*

*It was the will of the LORD to crush Him;*

*He has put Him to grief.”*

Now I don’t know if when the Psalm was being written there was any purposeful plan on David’s part to connect back to Job and forward to Isaiah, and on and on and on. But I mention to you that when I make connections like this or when I find connections like this, my heart swells up inside, knowing that our God is truly God, and seeing that all of Scripture is from Him, and being able to see connections between Job who is a type of Christ in Scripture, someone who is like us and who is referred to as someone who is blameless and upright, who is suffering for being innocent, who is mocked and scorned by his friends and was ultimately vindicated and restored at the end, and at the end a type of Christ, foreshadowing Christ to come.

We see that in Job. Job was a person who was languishing because of what his friends were telling him, and certainly asking that God would crush him because of this. And we see the same thing in Isaiah: it pleased God to crush Jesus for our sakes.

And so we come back to our Psalm, Psalm 41. And we ask ourselves: What is this bed of languishing that Christ is sitting upon. In verse 4 it is our sins that create this bed of languishing for Him.

We’re told that in the garden, the night that He was betrayed and just before He was arrested, Christ was praying fervently with agony, to the point where His sweat was like drops of blood. And even in saying it this way and emphasizing the languishing and agony, we still cannot fathom what that must have felt like.

We talked about using this Psalm to humble ourselves. I’m hoping that some of this language that we’re using is weighing on you, that you’re feeling the weight of that, the weight of our sins. And if I’m being honest, that’s the point of preparing for the Lord’s Supper. You feel the weight of that and then you take the sacrament, and you realize what Christ has done for you. And you realize what His atonement has done for you and purchased for you. Can you not feel the sense of relief, the burden being removed from your back? In *Pilgrim’s Progress* Christian feels the burden removed from his back. Does that not affect your Christian experience?—the joy you feel, the thankfulness you feel toward God; the renewed desire for obedience because of what He has done for you?

In our church we do this on a monthly basis. When I prepare myself well I get to experience this every month. It’s refreshing; it enables me to carry on till the next month and say, “I can do better. I can be more obedient; I can be more loving to God and to my neighbor.” In my mind this is what preparing well for the Lord’s Supper can do for you, for your Christian experience, for your godly practice, having good Biblical doctrine as the foundation for that; that three-legged stool.

To me this was like the gem of preparing that week: just being able to see all these connections. Clearly I cannot look at Psalm 41 again and not see Christ and His death on the cross in this Psalm.

And so as we continue, just looking over some of the other verses here, verses 5-8:

*“My enemies say of me in malice,*

*‘When will he die, and his name perish?’*

*And when one comes to see me, He utters empty words while his heart gathers iniquity.*

*When he goes out, he tells it abroad.*

*All who hate me whisper together about me;*

*They imagine the worst for me.”*

You can just picture yourself being in that situation where all of the people are mocking Him, scorning Him, the leaders of the Israelites devising in secret to kill Him. You know, this is the sense of the enemies plotting against Christ, leading up to His betrayal and His crucifixion.

We already talked about verse 9 being a prophecy of Judas. I mentioned here again that we can rightly see ourselves in this verse as well. Once again it clearly has a connection to Christ. And then in verses 11 and 12 the conclusion of the Psalm:

*“By this I know that You delight in me:*

*My enemy will not shout in triumph over me.*

*But You have upheld me because of my integrity,*

*And set me in Your presence forever.”*

I think it’s obvious now that when we read these we see Christ in these words. The enemy did not triumph over Him, and it was because of Christ’s integrity; He was sinless.

And so I think that as we conclude here I again just wanted to share some things that we can be doing better as we prepare to take the Lord’s Supper. I don’t know how the sacrament is offered at each of your churches. I don’t know if it’s a regular occurrence and how regular it is. But I would encourage you that if you are not now familiar with when your church celebrates, I would encourage you to seek out those in your church who lead the offering of that sacrament, and try to find out from them ahead of time: Hey, when do you do this? It needs to be on a set frequency because it’s going to be really hard to prepare if you don’t know that it’s coming until the moment of it.

Some of the things that are on the slide here are going back to the *Westminster Larger Catechism.* The question asks: *“How are those that receive the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper to prepare themselves before they come unto it?”* And so this is kind of a summary of that.

You should sincerely examine yourself of your sins and your wants, your desire for Christ and new obedience. Again, humble yourself. Once you’ve done that, repent; confess those things to God. Ask for His forgiveness. Lay hold of Christ and what He has done for you. Apprehend His mercy.

In preparing yourself for the Lord’s Supper you should also consider whether you are harboring anything against your neighbor, certainly your brother or sister in Christ; think even of close family. There have been times where my wife and I had been fighting and we were cold toward each other. The Lord’s Supper is a great way to reconcile: preparing yourself and saying, How can I receive what Christ has done for me and not extend that to others? How can I not be willing to forgive others if I have humbled myself to realize what Christ has done for me? The Lord’s Supper is a great time to be forgiving others.

The other thing we’re told is to affectionately meditate on Christ’s suffering and death. That is part of the reason why I decided to read through the Gospel accounts of the institution of the Lord’s Supper, reading through the accounts of the betrayal and the accounts of His crucifixion. Affectionately meditate on those. You know, it’s hard to read those and not have the Spirit drive you into those other areas. Oh yes, I’m the reason that He was on the cross. Oh yes, I’m the one who has sin in my life; I’m the one who needed this.

Certainly rejoice and give thanks in your preparation. Part of that Christian experience is rejoicing in what God has done for you. And then most importantly: renewing the exercise of these graces. This should be a continual thing in our lives. And while we should be repenting daily and confessing our sins daily and reading the word of God daily and doing all of these things daily, we don’t because we’re weak.

But preparing for the Lord’s Supper gives you a chance to say, “I’m going to renew my exercise of these things.” And you want to trust in God to feed, to nourish and refresh you by taking the Lord’s Supper. It is something that should produce a benefit in your life. You become more sanctified by doing it; the Spirit works through that sacrament.

One last thing that I’ll share with you is again from the *Westminster Larger Catechism.* This is Q. 175; it’s part of the same group of questions. It says: *“What is the duty of Christians after they have received the Lord’s Supper?”* So we’ve talked a lot about preparing for the Lord’s Supper. The Westminster Standards have a question about what you should do after you have received the Lord’s Supper.

And it says: *“The duty of Christians after they have received the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper is seriously to consider how they have behaved themselves therein, and with what success.”* We should examine ourselves afterwards as well. How did I do? Let’s give ourselves a performance review.

We do self-assessments at work, right? We should be doing that with our taking of the Lord’s Supper as well. How have we behaved ourselves, and with what success? If I’ve found quickening and comfort, I’ve done a good job. *“Bless God for it, beg the continuance of it, watch against relapses, fulfill your vows, and encourage yourselves to a frequent attendance on that ordinance.*

*“But if they find no present benefit, more exactly review your preparation unto and your character at the sacrament.”* In both, if you can approve yourself to God in your own conscience, then *“wait for the fruit of it in due time.”* But if you feel that you have failed in either, you are to be humbled, and to attend upon it afterwards with more care and diligence.

I do not always prepare for the Lord’s Supper as well as I should. This question is a good reminder that when I don’t I should humble myself and try to do better next time. I’m not saying that we’re going to be perfect. And I’m not saying that if you don’t take it well that you’re not a Christian. What I am trying to say is that there are benefits that we can receive if we’re taking the Lord’s Supper rightly. And I think that part of taking it rightly is preparing better ahead of time. And that’s what I’ve got for today. Any questions or comments? Don?

**Don:** I’m going to go down a rabbit trail now. Right on with everything you said. Thank you for drawing out Christ in this Psalm. So many of the other Psalms likewise speak of Christ. But I’m wondering, and this is speculation, I know? How aware was David that he was speaking of Christ? I’m sure that a lot of this was applicable to him personally as well, particularly the part about asking God to forgive him of his sins. That certainly wouldn’t be applicable to Christ, except through imputation.

**Jordan:** Yeah. You know, I’m glad you asked that question, Don. I don’t have an answer for you. But it reminded me of something else I wanted to share which is: How aware were others that this Psalm referred to Christ? And if you have your Bibles I want to go to John 13. That’s what started all this, right? The Scripture must be fulfilled; the verse in John 13 that took us back to Psalm 41.

I’m going to start here in verse 25; I’m just going to read for a little bit. And keep in mind that this is after Jesus said, “One of you will betray Me.” Okay, so that’s our context.

*“So that disciple, being the one that Jesus loved, leaning back against Jesus, said to Him, ‘Lord, who is it?’* “Who is the one who is going to betray You?”

*“Jesus answered, ‘it is he to whom I will give this morsel of bread when I have dipped it.’ So when He had dipped the morsel, He gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. And after he had taken the morsel Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, ‘What you are going to do, do quickly.’”*

Now here is where I want you to start paying attention. Pay attention to the whole thing, but pay closer attention to—

**Ted:** What verse?

**Jordan:** Verse 28. *“No one at the table knew why He had said this to him. Some thought that because Judas had the money bag that Jesus was telling him, ‘Buy what we need for the Feast,’ or that he should give something to the poor. So immediately after receiving the morsel of bread, he went out.”*

Now I found that they don’t know why He said this. It may be two things.

**Ted:** Mm-hmm.

**Jordan:** “Go buy what we need for the Feast,” or “Go and give something to the poor.” What was verse 1 of Psalm 41? *“Blessed is the man who considers the poor.”* I think, Don, that it’s not too much of a stretch to say that the disciples may have known when Christ said that the Scripture must be fulfilled, and when He quotes Psalm 41 verse 9,--and this is totally my speculation,--I don’t think it’s a far stretch for the disciples to realize that oh, this is Psalm 41. It starts out, “Blessed is the man who gives to the poor.”

Jesus says to Judas, “What you are going to do, go and do it quickly.” You may say, “Well why does He say that?” Maybe it’s to give something to the poor.

**Don:** Not only that, Jordan, but when Mary was anointing Jesus, Judas berates the other disciples. “This money could have been used to give to the poor!”

**Jordan:** Sure.

**Don:** He may have had that in mind too, in a perverted way.

**Jordan:** So as I was reviewing this, to me it seems obvious that Christ really knew that Psalm 41 referred to Him. I think the disciples missed it; that’s what I’m saying.

**Don:** Right.

**Jordan:** This is my personal opinion. I think David likely knew that it was also a reference foreshadowing the Messiah. Now to what degree he knew it, I don’t know. That’s a personal opinion, and so I can’t support that with a ton of evidence.

**Don:** In 1 Peter 1 it talks about the fact that the Old Testament writers knew that they were not talking about themselves, but Christ they were speaking of.

**Jordan:** Sure. So my sense is that David knew. My sense is that Christ knew. My sense is that the disciples missed it. And part of my hope this morning is that we would not also continue to miss it, that we would see Christ in this Psalm. So I’m glad you brought that question up because I had forgotten to share that. Anything else? Yes?

**David Miller:** A foreshadowing of the Lord’s Supper is when Abraham offered Melchizedek bread and wine. This is a foreshadowing of Christ.

**Jordan:** Yep.

**Brave Man:** *(Unclear)*

**Jordan:** That’s a great point. I’ll go through this quickly, but one of the points I have from the Westminster Standards is that it’s a bond of pledge of our communion with Him and with each other. The idea is yes, we are communing together as the people of God. And I know that we’ve been spending a lot of time in the Book of Acts in our church. You continue to see the unity that the early church had together, where all things were in common; they shared all things as though they were in common with the unity they had. And that’s the thing that has been on my heart a lot. As someone who is a deacon in our church, how do we create that unity among ourselves when others are in need? We strive to be faithful in the ministry of mercy to each other. And the sense of the unity that we have is a very big part of that. Any final comments?

**Ted:** I just want to let you know that was superb.

**Jordan:** I’m glad to hear that.

**Ted:** There is a supernatural feeding on Christ; it is not just simply remembering. And I’m in the middle of a podcast on the history of the doctrine that the early Reformers had—Luther, Calvin and others,--of how they were actually feeding on Christ. There is a real presence of Christ in Communion that’s not anyplace else. We tend to think of this as being simply a remembrance. But we need to remember to examine ourselves. Otherwise it becomes cerebral and not supernatural. Jordan, hat you’re doing is so far beyond what I’m experiencing. I don’t feel humbled; I feel devastated.

**Jordan:** Good! *(Laughter)*

**Ted:** You said, “I’ve done a good job on that.” That’s so beyond my thinking.

**Jordan:** Is there someone back there?

**Matt Garvic:** *(Unclear)* A reference to Revelation 21 and the heavenly banquet.

**Jordan:** That’s great. Don, did you have—

**Don:** Yes. I vehemently disagree with the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation.

**Jordan:** Sure.

**Don:** What Ted said brought to my mind Luther at his first mass. And when the time for the words of consecration came he couldn’t speak. He was awestruck at what was about to happen. Even though I don’t believe in transubstantiation, are we awestruck with the knowledge that at the Lord’s Supper we are feeding on Christ by faith?

**Jordan:** All right; I’ll close in prayer. Heavenly Father, we’re thankful to You that You have given us time this morning to examine Your word. We pray, Lord, that Your Spirit would apply it to our hearts and to our minds and to our lives. And we particularly ask You, Lord here this morning that through Your Spirit You would descend to help us in our preparation to take the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. You have given us this sacrament, Lord, to be a sign and a seal of the benefits of Christ to us. We pray that You would help us to take it seriously, that it would be a blessing in our lives and in the lives of others. And we pray, Lord, that we would not be moved merely by our minds only, but in what we know we would be moved in our hearts and our hands as well. We pray now, Lord, that You’d be with us the rest of this day and this weekend as we prepare for Your Lord’s Day on Sunday. We ask this all in Your Son’s name. Amen.

**Brave Men:** Amen. *(Applause)*