

Pardon the Interruption

Pastor James Foley – Shared Sunday, June 9, 2024

COMMUNION

- 1) The WAFER Symbolizes the BODY of Christ – Broken for Us
- 2) The JUICE Symbolizes the BLOOD of Christ – Shed for Us All

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NIV)

23 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.” 25 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.” 26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for joining us. Whether you are here in person or joining via the livestream you are most welcome! Please have a Bible at the ready and be prepared to take notes as you like. We have much to cover in a rather short space of time.

SETTING THE STAGE

NOTE 1 – Today I would like to offer a standalone message on a theme God has impressed on my heart as of late.

NOTE 2 – We will begin by reading a slate of scenes from the ministry of Christ. As we do, consider this question:

Q. What do all of these scenes or accounts have in common?

Luke 8:41b–48

41 . . . a man named Jairus, a synagogue leader, came and fell at Jesus' feet, pleading with him to come to his house 42 because his only daughter, a girl of about twelve, was dying. As Jesus was on his way, the crowds almost crushed him. 43 And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years, but no one could heal her. 44 She came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak, and immediately her bleeding stopped.

45 "Who touched me?" Jesus asked. When they all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you." 46 But Jesus said, "Someone touched me; I know that power has gone out from me."

47 Then the woman, seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came trembling and fell at his feet. In the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed. 48 Then he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace."

Matthew 14:9b, 10b, 12–21

9 The king [Herod] . . . 10 . . . had John beheaded in the prison. . . . 12 John's disciples came and took his body and buried it. Then they went and told Jesus. 13 When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. 14 When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick.

15 As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food." 16 Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat." 17 "We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish," they answered.

18 "Bring them here to me," he said. 19 And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. 20 They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. 21 The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Matthew 8:23–27

23 Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed him. 24 Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. 25 The disciples went and woke him, saying, “Lord, save us! We’re going to drown!”

26 He replied, “You of little faith, why are you so afraid?” Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm. 27 The men were amazed and asked, “What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!”

Mark 2:1b–12

1 . . . when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. 2 They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. 3 Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. 4 Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. 5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”

6 Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, 7 “Why does this fellow talk like that? He’s blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?” 8 Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, “Why are you thinking these things? 9 Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up, take your mat and walk’? 10 But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.” So he said to the man, 11 “I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.” 12 He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this!”

Luke 7:36–50

36 When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee’s house and reclined at the table. 37 A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee’s house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. 38 As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

39 When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner.”

40 Jesus answered him, “Simon, I have something to tell you.” “Tell me, teacher,” he said.

41 “Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. 42 Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?”

43 Simon replied, “I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven.” “You have judged correctly,” Jesus said.

44 Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. 45 You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. 46 You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. 47 Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little.”

48 Then Jesus said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.”

49 The other guests began to say among themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?”

50 Jesus said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

DELVING IN PT. 1

Q. What common theme(s) do we see in these selections?

KEY – I am happy to let you speak for a moment, as I am sure many have much to say re: these varied episodes!

Q. What common theme(s) do we see in these selections?

A1. In every scene we witness that Christ is somehow interrupted amidst life. Let us consider the following again:

a) Luke 8:41b–48. We read that Christ was interrupted by the woman with the issue of blood as He was going to help Jairus and his imperiled daughter. Consider what the text states (Luke 8:41b–44a): “41 . . . a man named Jairus, a synagogue leader, came and fell at Jesus’ feet, pleading with him to come to his house 42 because his only daughter, a girl of about twelve, was dying. As Jesus was on his way, the crowds almost crushed him. 43 And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years, but no one could heal her. 44 She came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak . . .”

b) Matthew 14:9b, 10b, 12–14. We read that Jesus was interrupted by the masses as He sought a space to grieve. Consider what the text reveals (Matt. 14: 9b, 10b, 12–14): “9 The king [Herod] . . . 10 . . . had John beheaded in the prison. . . . 12 John’s disciples came and took his body and buried it. Then they went and told Jesus. 13 When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. 14 When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd . . .”

c) Matthew 8:23–27. We read that Jesus was interrupted by panicked disciples amidst a storm while he slept. Consider what the text records (Matt. 8:23–25): “23 Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed him. 24 Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. 25 The disciples went and woke him, saying, ‘Lord, save us! We’re going to drown!’”

d) Mark 2:1–12. We read that Jesus was interrupted by those seeking the healing of a friend amidst His teaching. Consider what the text records (Mark 2:1b–4): “. . . when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. 2 They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. 3 Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. 4 Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on.”

e) Luke 7:36–50. We read that Christ was interrupted by a sinful woman as He shared a meal with a Pharisee. Consider afresh and anew what text records (Luke 7:36–38): “36 When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee’s house and reclined at the table. 37 A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee’s house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. 38 As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.”

A2. We also note what Jesus did amidst these moments of interruption: He served others and maximized ministry.

a) Luke 8:41b–48. How did Jesus handle the interruption of the woman w/ the issue of blood who touched Him? Ultimately, He was used of God to bring healing to her, delivering this poor woman from years of suffering. Moreover, He was used of God to share a timely lesson on the priority and the power of faith. Note once again:

Luke 8:42b–48

42 . . . As Jesus was on his way [i.e., to help Jairus and his daughter], the crowds almost crushed him. 43 And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years, but no one could heal her. 44 She came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak, and immediately her bleeding stopped.

45 “Who touched me?” Jesus asked. When they all denied it, Peter said, “Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you.” 46 But Jesus said, “Someone touched me; I know that power has gone out from me.”

47 Then the woman, seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came trembling and fell at his feet. In the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed. 48 Then he said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace.”

b) Matthew 14:9b, 10b, 12–21. How did Jesus respond to the masses who interrupted His solitude amidst loss? Ultimately, He was used of God to bring healing to the sick, as well as feed 5,000 men (i.e., evidence of power)!

Matthew 14:9b, 10b, 12–21

13 When Jesus heard what had happened [i.e., death of JTB], he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. 14 When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick.

15 As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, “This is a remote place, and it’s already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food.” 16 Jesus replied, “They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.” 17 “We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish,” they answered.

18 “Bring them here to me,” he said. 19 And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. 20 They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. 21 The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.

c) Matthew 8:23–27. How did He respond to His panicked disciples who interrupted His much-needed sleep? Ultimately, Christ was used of God in the moment to demonstrate His power over the forces of nature and more!

Matthew 8:23–27

23 Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed him. 24 Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. 25 The disciples went and woke him, saying, “Lord, save us! We’re going to drown!” 26 He replied, “You of little faith, why are you so afraid?” Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm.

27 The men were amazed and asked, “What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!”

d) Mark 2:1–12. How did Christ Jesus respond to those who interrupted His teaching to break through a ceiling? He was used to bring healing to a paralytic, demonstrate the power of faith, and reveal His power to pardon sin!

Mark 2:1b–12

1 . . . when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. 2 They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. 3 Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. 4 Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. 5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”

6 Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, 7 “Why does this fellow talk like that? He’s blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

8 Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, “Why are you thinking these things? 9 Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up, take your mat and walk’? 10 But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.” So he said to the man, 11 “I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.” 12 He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this!”

e) Luke 7:36–50. How did Christ respond to a sinful woman who interrupted His meal with a particular Pharisee? Ultimately, He was used of God to restore the wayward, expose the self-righteousness of the religious, and set the context for one of the most beautiful moments of worship chronicled in the entirety of Scripture. Let us note:

Luke 7:36–50

36 When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee’s house and reclined at the table. 37 A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee’s house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. 38 As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

39 When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner.”

40 Jesus answered him, “Simon, I have something to tell you.” “Tell me, teacher,” he said.

41 “Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. 42 Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?”

43 Simon replied, “I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven.” “You have judged correctly,” Jesus said.

44 Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. 45 You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. 46 You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. 47 Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little.”

48 Then Jesus said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.”

49 The other guests began to say among themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?”

50 Jesus said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

DELVING IN PT. 2

Q. What do we see herein?

A. We see that Jesus was ongoingly interrupted, yet He maximized each interruption as an opportunity for God!

Q. How could the Lord handle interruption so well?

A. He was genuinely moved by compassion for those in need.

QUOTE – “Jesus didn’t grow weary of interruptions. He didn’t send the paralytic or the unclean woman away (as the religious leaders would have done). Instead, he healed them and, more importantly, forgave them of their sins. When Jesus was emotionally and physically exhausted, he looked on the needy with compassion. Jesus wasn’t frustrated when people cut his sermons short, intruded into his prayer time, or delayed much-needed rest. He knew these interruptions were not a distraction from his purpose. Rather, these were the very people God the Father sent him to serve.”

PERSONAL APPLICATIONS 2024

Q. What can we learn from this? How should these scenes from Christ’s life shape those who bear His Name?

A1. We Must Recognize that Life Will Abound with Interruptions.

NOTE 1 – We all live at breakneck speeds with overly packed schedules, and no one who enjoys interruptions! Yet if Jesus experienced interruption ongoingly, and we bear His Name, perhaps we should be readied for it. You and I might do well to consider the following proverb: “Write your plans in pencil and give God the eraser.”

A2. We Must Remember that God Can Use Interruptions for His Glory.

NOTE 2 – This was true in the life of Christ Jesus, and it can be true in our lives. Jesus was able to effectively navigate interruption and impact lives for time and eternity. Can the Lord not do the same through you and me? Like Him, we must be flexible enough to set aside our aims and “do what we see the Father doing” (John 5:19)!

QUOTE – “I don’t know anyone who likes being interrupted. It doesn’t matter whether we are talking or in the middle of doing something, we don’t like being interrupted. Interruptions mean having to stop what you are doing and adjust to the interruption. If we want to encounter God, however, we better be ready for interruptions. The Bible says, “Many are the plans in a person’s heart, but it is the Lord’s purpose that prevails” (Prov. 19:21). God has a habit of interrupting. Time and again throughout the Bible, we see examples of where God interrupts what a person is doing and asks them to adjust to something different. In every case, once the adjustment was made, God accomplished his purpose through them.”

A3. We Must Learn to Genuinely Love Others (i.e., Operating in Compassion).

QUOTE – The philosopher Dallas Willard once called hurry “the great enemy of spiritual life in our day,” and urged followers of Jesus to “ruthlessly eliminate hurry from your life.” . . . We simply cannot live with Jesus in his kingdom, and live a life of speed.”

QUOTE – Love is painfully time consuming. All parents know this, as do all lovers, and most long-term friends. There’s no shortcut. No life-hack. No killer app. It takes an enormous amount of time to love well. Love and hurry are oil and water: they simply do not mix. All of my worst moments as a father, a neighbor or friend, are when I’m in a hurry—late for an appointment, behind on my unrealistic to-do list, trying to cram too much into my day. I ooze anger, tension, a critical nagging—the antithesis of love.

If you don’t believe me, next time you’re trying to get your type B wife and three young, easily distracted children out of the house, and you’re running late . . . just pay attention to how you relate to them. Does it look and feel like love? Or is it far more in the vein of agitation, anger, a biting comment, a rough glare?

It comes as no surprise that in the apostle Paul’s definition of love, the first descriptor is “patient.” . . . the late Japanese theologian Kosuke Koyama said it this way: “God walks ‘slowly’ because he is love. If he is not love he would have gone much faster. Love has its speed. It is an inner speed. It is a spiritual speed. It is a different kind of speed from the technological speed to which we are accustomed. It is ‘slow’ yet it is lord over all other speeds since it is the speed of love. There’s a reason people talk about ‘walking with God,’ not ‘running with God.’ It’s because God is love.

Life is full of interruptions; no doubt an interruption will come your way today – a child, or co-worker, or unexpected phone call. Rather than rushing through the interruption, look for ways to un-hurry and be present to the person in love.”

Q1. What if you and I learned to view every “interruption” as an “opportunity” for God’s love to effect change?

Q2. Who among us is willing to let God “interrupt” us amidst life and living, that we might bring glory to Him?

CONCLUSION

NOTE 1 – Check out our website for any of our beyond Sunday ministries (MM; WM; CYC).

NOTE 2 – I have membership packets available for interested parties. Please see me post-service.

NOTE 3 – Father’s Day Service next Sunday morning. It’s my hope that we will all be present to celebrate!

NOTE 4 – Have you been baptized in water as a disciples of Jesus Christ? Baptismal gathering on Sunday, June 23.

NOTE 5 – I would call you to worship the Lord through your giving. Feel free to give online or in person.

Numbers 6:24–26

24 The LORD bless you
and keep you;

25 the LORD make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;

26 the LORD turn his face toward you
and give you peace.