

Drink the Cup and Get a Life (part 2)

John 18:1-11

Date: July 24, 2011

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Prayer

And now our Creator, we pray you'd help us to preach now, in Jesus' Name. Amen.

Introduction

This sermon is really last week's sermon, plus one. I didn't have time to get through last week's sermon so we're gonna keep preaching on the same thing. I'll re-preach a few things in a different way. But hopefully that will help because the concepts are really challenging, but I think if we get it, it changes every moment of our lives.

Message

There's this old story about a little old monk that was being chased by a ferocious tiger and the monk, ran and ran and ran from the tiger until he came to the edge of sheer cliff. And at that moment he noticed that there was a rope hanging down over the side of the cliff. He shimmied down the rope. Hanging there on the rope, he looked down hundreds of feet below to a field of jagged rocks. He looked up and he saw the tiger with his claws bared and just then he saw two little mice running along the ledge of the cliff and they began nibbling on the rope. What to do? He saw a strawberry growing out of the side of the cliff. He plucked it, ate it, and then he said, "That's the best strawberry I ever tasted."

When you get to heaven, perhaps the Lord will not ask, "How many prayers have you prayed?" But, "Did you enjoy the strawberry?" "Did you drink the cup that I handed you?"

You know, if that monk had been preoccupied with the tiger—his past, and anxious about the rocks—his future, he wouldn't have tasted the strawberry NOW.

Well it appears that Jesus tasted every strawberry that his Father provided, with no regrets, bitterness, or shame, taking no thought for tomorrow. He drank the cup. So when He drank good wine, it tasted best to him. When He went to a funeral, He cried the most heartfelt tears. When he made furniture, his work wasn't just work; it was worship. Even when He poured the cup, the covenant in his blood...you remember what He did? He gave thanks.

When the Father said, "Now is the time: crucifixion, death and hell," He drank that cup to the very last drop. And God raised him and his life indestructible from the dead, his resurrected and eternal body bearing marks from this temporal world. That's incredible!

Paul wrote, *"These slight momentary afflictions prepare us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all compare."* Well anyway, Jesus lived an eternal life in this temporal world for he lived it every day drinking the cup that the Father handed him. He lived it here in space and time by grace through faith.

That's what we talked about last time.

John 18, maybe you'll remember, Judas and a band of soldiers come to the garden to take Jesus' life. In the morning, they'll literally take it on a tree. A tree in a garden, a tree we call the cross.

Well, when they get to the garden this night, Jesus asks, "Whom to do seek?" And they say, "Jesus of Nazareth," and He replies, "I AM." Hopefully, you'll remember "I AM" is the name of God, Yahweh. I AM that I AM. God isn't simply a thing in space and time. God created all space and time with his Word, and John tells us: "*God is Light.*" And Einstein tells us that at the speed of light all time is present in, like, an eternal now. All time is now.

Perhaps, eternity isn't time *less*, so much as time *full*. So eternal life isn't *devoid* of time, it's *full* of time. And time, all time, is full of God and full of meaning. Perhaps an eternal life isn't trapped in time, but an eternal life enjoys all time.

John 18:10

Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant and cut off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.) So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into its sheath; shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?"

"*Shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?*" To a drink a cup is to experience an experience. And to share a cup is to share an experience. It's to know someone.

I once snuck a drink from Amy Grant's pop can at a concert. Why? So that I could feel like I knew her.

John wrote, "*Eternal life is knowing God and the one whom he has sent.*" Jesus said, "*Shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?*" Now that's a pretty amazing statement when you stop to analyze it: "*Shall I not the drink the cup that the Father has given me?*" How could anyone not drink the cup that the Father has given them? I mean it's like Lady Eve says to the serpent in C.S. Lewis' science fiction novel *Perelandra*. When tempted by the snake she says, "Your words seem to have no meaning...to walk out of his will is to walk into nowhere."

You see, if I AM creates all things with his Word, his will, then to will what God does not will must be to will no thing and must be to walk into no where and nothing. Right? Does that make sense?

When Julian of Norwich had her famous vision she wrote what she saw. Listen to this: "*God in an instant, a moment, a now.*" And she saw that: "He does everything that is done. So everything that is done is done well." And then she writes, "Therefore it seemed to me that sin is nothing. I did not see sin, for I believe it has no sort of substance, no portion of being, nor could it be recognized were it not for the suffering that it causes."

You know God does not *will* sin, but perhaps He wills that we encounter sin, the nothingness, the not God, and then will his "something-ness" eternally in freedom.

Whatever the case, a life of sin is an empty life, a meaningless life, a false life, a dead life, no life.

Last time we said, “Eve took the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in order to create herself in God’s image, and all she created was nothing.” She created an empty life.

Well anyway, how do we not drink the cup that the Father has for us? I mean that really philosophical conundrum. Perhaps you can eat a strawberry and not taste it.

Anthony Demillo, he wrote this, “Eternal life is now, we’re surrounded by it, like the fish in the ocean, but we have no notion of it at all.”

“Shall I not drink the cup?” said Jesus. And consider this: Jesus was predestined to drink it. If anyone was ever predestined, it was Jesus. This is the plan for the fullness of time. He’s the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Jesus was entirely predestined and yet Jesus was entirely free.

John 10:18, he says *“No one takes my life from me, but I lay it down on my own accord.”*

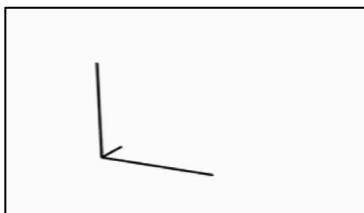
Jesus said, *“The Son only does what he sees his Father doing (that’s present tense.”* So, Jesus drank the cup—every moment, each moment, in freedom, and He lived his eternal life according to plan.

Last time, we said perhaps you not only have eternal but you have an eternal life. You have an eternal self, a completed, perfected self which is already seated with Christ in the heavenly places, an eternal life constructed of eternal moments, lived in this world of space and time.

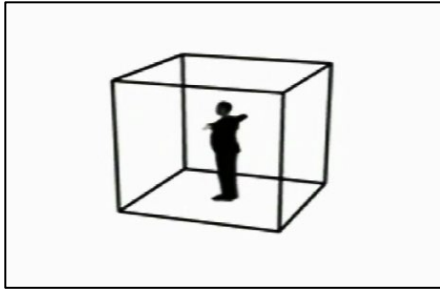
To help us think about that we watched this little video. Let’s watch it again:

Self in Time Clip

The first three dimensions can be described with these words:
Length, Width, and Depth



What word can we assign to the fourth dimension?

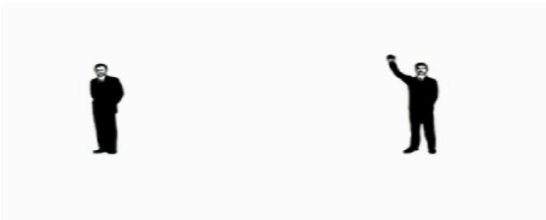


One answer would be duration.

If we think of ourselves as we were one minute ago.



and then imagine ourselves at this moment,



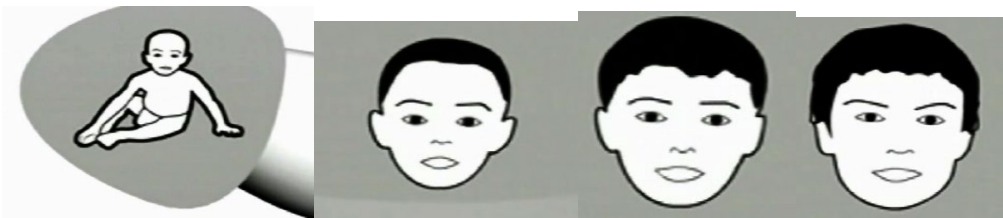
The line that we could draw from the one minute ago version to the right now version would be a line in the fourth dimension.



If you were to see your body in the fourth dimension, you'd be like a long angulating snake with your embryonic self at one end and your deceased self at the other.



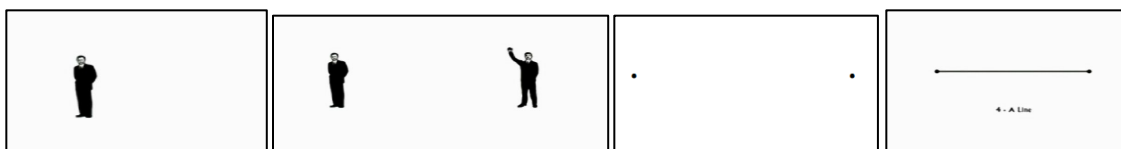
But because we live from moment to moment in the 3rd dimension we are like our second dimensional flat landers



just like that flatlander who can only see 2 dimensional cross sections of objects from the dimension above.



We as three-dimensional creatures can only see three dimensions of our 4th dimensional self.

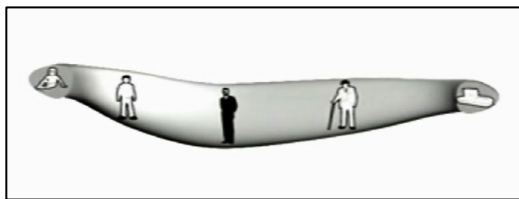


So you see, God created the fourth dimension, and so I think what means that when He looks at us He doesn't just see this.



This isn't your life, this is a moment in time.

But this is your whole life.



That's your life constructed with countless moments.

Anthropologists, psychologists, and philosophers talk about the "I" and the "Me." And the idea that "I" create "Me" with my decisions in time.. I create "Me," myself. "Me" is my objective reality in space and time. It's my body, it's my history, my life. "Me" is a record of my decisions. And "I" am the one that makes those decisions in time. "Me" is constantly changing in time, but "I" remain I. I am the same "I" that stared at my shoes on the bus in second grade and wondered about me today. I remained I, but I acquired a lot more of me over time.

I often think about being another me. Do you ever say, "I wish that I was you?" You see that's the "I" hoping, imagining it was another me, but I can't imagine being another "I." I think the Bible might call the "I" my spirit, and the "Me" my life, my psyche, my soul. I observe me, but I can't observe "I" for as soon as I observe "I," "I" has become me.

I exist now, but I can't reflect upon Now, for as soon as I think about Now, Now is in the past and Now is longer Now. And I can't worry about now, because I can only worry about things in the future and the future is not now. It's not now.

See? I can't find now in space and time. So maybe now is more than simply something that's in space and time. I can't find now in space and time, and yet I know there is a Now because now is where I am.

Augustine wrote this: "There is nothing that I know better than now. It is more real to me than any other time, and yet when I reflect upon it, it doesn't exist at all."

So maybe Now isn't simply a part of time. Scientists like Einstein, philosophers like Martin Buber, theologians like Paul Tillich, and writers like C.S. Lewis, they say, "Now is the point eternity touches time and time touches eternity." Now is the point that I live my life. Now I make decisions. Everything happens now.

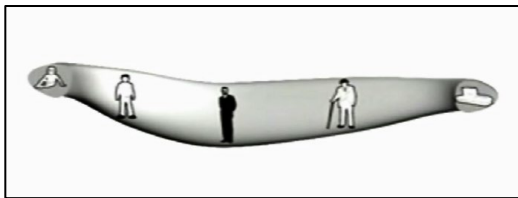
Some say all that matters is now. The problem is that now happens in this thing called “Me.” And I appear to be trapped in “Me” in time. And check this out: You can learn about me as an object in space and time, but I can only be known now. I can only be known by subjective encounter.

If I say to you, “I *know* Barack Obama.” You say, “You liar, you don’t know him. You know about him. You read some books about him, maybe you know his history a little bit, but in order to know him, you have to meet him. You have to sit down and look him in the eye. You have to share a common moment, spirit touching spirit.” You see, I can only know a spirit now and God is Spirit. And I AM is God’s name.

You know when my kids were little, they didn’t know a thing about me. Yet I’d tell people they know who I am. I was known by them, better than I’m known by any of you except Susan.

Knowing God our Father is eternal life and we must become “like little children to enter his kingdom,” said Jesus.

Well like I was saying, here’s your life.



And then we ask this question: Did you make your life? Am I the creator of me? Well here’s the problem. Even if I make me or think I make me, I did not make I. And here’s another problem: According to scripture, I am dead. Apart from the grace of God in Christ Jesus, I can do nothing so all my choices are nothing. All my choices are sin. They create an empty illusion that I call Me—a sinful body.

Genesis 6:5: “*I AM that I AM (Yahweh) saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And Yahweh was grieved that He had made man.*” Wow!

So, what’s my sin? We talk about sin? Well, it’s original sin—in the Garden.

I took God’s life to make my own life.

I chose to know *about* God to make *myself* God.

I chose to know about God to create myself as God.

I chose to know about I AM rather than *know* I AM.

You see, in *our* faith, sin isn’t like a few bad choices here and there. Sin is every choice *apart* from the grace of God in Christ Jesus and God is grace and those sinful choices produce a sin-full me— that is an empty me— a body of nothing but death and death is nothing—an arrogant, self-centered, terrified, anxiety-riddled and lonely me. “*The day you eat of it, you shall surely die,*” said I AM.

Well, Jesus never sinned. And the opposite of sin is faith. Never sinned, always faith, Jesus trusted his Father to create his life and give it to him as a gift. He lived by grace through faith. The Son only does what He sees his Father doing (present tense) so He received each moment as a gift, and he ate every strawberry, I think that means. He shed every tear. Every moment was the decision called faith, hope, and love. Faith, hope, and love remain, so every moment was eternal, and so He lived his eternal life in this temporal world.

We make we a non-life. Jesus lives an eternal life, but on the cross, through a mystery that no theologian understands, Jesus *gave* us his life. He gave us his knowing God, his communion with God. He gave his eternal life to us saying, *"This is the cup of the covenant in my blood, drink of it, all of you."* The life is in the blood. The Life, drink it, all you dead, empty people.

Now, listen to the words of Paul, remembering that according to Scripture he was the worst sinner that ever lived, if you get this, it will blow your mind.

Galatians 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who live (I who make decision, I who make my life) but Christ who lives in me and moreover the life I live now (the life I now live) in the flesh, I live (literally, this is the Greek) by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and delivered himself up (betrayed himself up, handed himself up) for me."

Do you hear what He's saying? A good choice in me—faith, hope, and love in me is Christ living his life in me. I mean you loved someone right? You had a little hope somewhere, right? You've had a little faith somewhere, right? That's not just you. It's his Spirit in me. His I in me and check this out: 1 Corinthians 6:17, this blows my mind too, Paul writes, *"He who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him."*

So, He sends his Spirit into my heart crying Abba Father and his I is somehow joined to my I, like the two become one and I commune with I AM in me, and I live his life in this world, in this world, his eternal life which becomes my eternal life. "He comes to you as your life," writes Paul Darcy.

The 17th century French mystic madam Jeanne Guyon wrote this:

The revelation you receive (when you abandon yourself to God), will come to you as reality. This is the way it was in the life of Paul. He did not ponder the sufferings of Christ; he did not consider the marks of suffering on the Lord's body. Instead, Paul bore in his own body the experiences of his Lord. He even said, "I bear in my body the marks of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 6:17).

Did he do so by considering such marks? No. Jesus had personally imprinted Himself upon Paul.

And Jesus' life became Paul's eternal life.

Well, this is still really the introduction to my sermon. I'm sorry about that, but I hope that this entire introduction has created a little frustration in you (frustration with some paradox).

I hope you're thinking something like this,

"Hey Peter, Paul called himself the chief of sinners and yet he is Christ's eternal life?"

"And Peter, if I'm following you, I must have two lives. That is I must have two me's: A me before Christ, and a me after Christ; an old man, and a new man.; a false self and a real self; the me that I create, and the me that I receive by grace; an empty, dead me and a full eternal me; a me empty of faith and a me full of faith and love always choosing love. And let's just be honest, I'm still both, I'm still both of those things."

"And Peter you said God redeems our life, our whole life. That's all my moments and I can choose now, I can live those moments now, but I can't go back in time and change all my decisions. I mean we dream about that. We're stuck in time, but we dream about being out of time, which is weird, but we can't do that. But we dream about that. We watch movies about that. We can't do that, it's a paradox and if we even think about it we go cross-eyed."

Clip from *Austin Powers The Spy Who Shagged Me*

[Austin and Basil Exposition (from the ministry of defense) are driving in a small vehicle into the "Secret Projects Room.]"

Basil Exposition: *Austin the test results confirm that you've lost your mojo and it couldn't come at a worst time. We evidence that Dr. Evil has developed a time machine and has traveled back to the year 1969.*

Luckily, we, too, have developed a time travel device to travel you back to the 60's. Stop, this is where you input your destination.

Austin Powers: *What do you think, Basum, if I travel back to 1969 and I was frozen in 1967, presumably I could go visit my frozen self, but if I'm still frozen in 1967, how could I have been thawed in the 90's and travel back*

Oh no, I've gone cross-eyed.

Basil Exposition: *I suggest that you don't worry about this sort of thing and just enjoy yourself. That goes for you all, too.*

Austin Powers: Yes.

Now, Austin Powers isn't the best role model. So I'm not suggesting that you make too much of that. I'm just saying Dr. Evil has stolen our mojo and we'd all like to go back in time and "choose love" where we once failed at choosing love and thus defeat Dr. Evil.

2nd Clip from *Austin Powers The Spy Who Shagged Me*

Dr. Evil: *Well, it looks like you have a choice Mr. Powers*

Austin: [Arriving from the time machine] *I choose love baby!*

Past Austin: *Wait a tick. Who are you?*

Austin: *I'm you ten minutes from now.*

Past Austin: *Damn it. You are handsome, baby, yeah!*

Austin: [laughs] *I was just thinking the same.*

Well, perhaps you've developed some frustration with a paradox and so you are thinking, "I can't go back in time, I can't go back in time and change my choices—choose love where I didn't choose love. That's cross-eyed." And furthermore, think about this: The cup that I drink today is largely the result of bad choices yesterday. How could the cup I drink today be God's eternal will when it's constructed of all this bad will? In other words my situation today is constructed with bad choices made yesterday. How could our bad choices be God's perfect choice? How can I drink the cup when I made the cup with sin and others made the cup with sin?

Well, I can't travel back in time. And yet I know I AM, who made time, and He *is* all the time. So all my time is eternally present to I AM. So now I pray now and that now is the same now in which God speaks all things into existence in Christ and it's the same now that Christ makes all things new by the blood of his cross. Cross-eyed "not a bad idea, Austin."

So get cross-eyed.

I have a friend with whom Susan and I have prayed over the years. She was just horribly abused as a young woman and a child. Haunted by the past, terrified of the future, she couldn't live now. Over the years, she'd come to us for prayer and in prayer, in visions, Jesus would take her back to old moments and make them new, for He'd show her that He was there in every moment and that even though she didn't know it at the time, his story is, her story. He even showed her that her scars were on his body.

And when He'd reveal himself in those old moments, he'd ask her to make new decisions—decisions to believe his love and decisions to love as she just saw herself loved. Decisions to forgive. When she'd make those decisions with him and by the power of his Spirit, those past moments would change. Change, like the cross changed from the greatest evil into the greatest good. Like all those moments were nailed to cross with him. Ashes would turn to beauty. Sorrow would turn into Joy. Shame would turn into mercy. Wounds would reveal glory.

One night, years ago, she came over for prayer, haunted by this series of pictures. I won't tell you all the pictures, but one of the pictures was the Halloween night long ago where she had been dressed like a little angel by her mother and that was really significant to her because she told us she always wanted to be an angel.

When her father came home, he took her to a meeting where they stripped her and abused her because they hated angels. We prayed and Jesus appeared to her as she sobbed, and I remember she cried, "Jesus, please, please hold me," and he wouldn't hold her. She asked Jesus, "Why won't you hold me?" And she heard him answer: "You have to give me those pictures. Those pictures are a part of who you are." I remember thinking, "No, that can't be right. Jesus, you have to destroy those pictures." But instead, he completed those pictures. He filled each moment with himself. As she surrendered each picture, he'd reveal himself in each picture. And she'd make new choices with him

now and he would entirely change the meaning of each of those past moments, which changed the meaning of her life and then he would take the picture, place it in a frame, and hand it back to her.

In the last picture, he entered in glory, with eyes of fire. He took her from the table, and she would describe all this to me as it would happen and Susan would sometimes see it. He took her from the table and dressed her in white robes. He dressed her like an angel and then Jesus placed her on his lap.

He told her how He was so sorry, and He told her how much he hurt for her and how He, the King of all Glory, fought so hard for her. Then He told her, “You *are* and you will always be my little angel.” And I remember I said to her, “Look! He is holding you, and He’s telling you who you are—who you eternally are.”

And then He told her this: “Your pictures are my pictures.” You see those moments are *their* moments. And when He holds her, He holds all of her, past, present, future. And when she surrenders a past moment, in this present moment, she watches Jesus fill her *empty* life with her *eternal* life, which is Christ’s life.

Well after a time, my friend looked at me with tears in her eyes and she said: “How do you think it makes God feel when we’re ashamed of those pictures?” I remember I said, “Well I guess that means that we are ashamed of him.”

He redeems *all* your life with his life.

Julian of Norwich writes, “His love never allows our time to be lost.”

So your eternal life is your temporal life filled with his life.

Faith grows in fields of fear and doubt.

Hope grows in the land of despair.

Love grows in loss.

Grace grows in the empty places that we call sin.

The Bible calls those things the harvest of the earth, eternal realities groan in temporal soil.

Paul writes, “*God consigned all men to disobedience that he may have mercy upon all.*”

Perhaps that dead and empty me that I create with sin is a necessary component in the creation of that eternal me that God creates with Grace. Perhaps that is why he stretches out time so long and space so deep that we might know his story. And not just know his story, live his story, and know him. That we might experience his absence, delight in his presence, and eternally choose him in freedom.

You see, I think each one of us is witnessing our own creation in the very image of God. Have you ever stopped to wonder how God creates a Saint John, Saint Peter, or Saint Paul?

- How would you create John, the apostle of love, except that once he was the one that want to fire down, call out fire on an entire Samaritan village.
- How would you create Peter, the rock, except that at one time he denied his Lord three times?
- How would create the Apostle Paul, the apostle of grace, except that at one time he was the chief of all sinners.?

Well we ask, “How could my bad choices be God’s good choice? How could my bad will be God’s good will? How could I drink the cup when the cup is constructed with sin? Well, think for a moment about the cup that Jesus is drinking this night.

In John 18:11 He says, “*Peter, shall I not drink the cup that the Father has for me?*” Well if I’m Peter, I’m thinking, “Yeah, sure, go ahead, drink the cup that the Father has for you, but this is not the cup the Father has for you. This is the cup that Judas has for you. This is the cup that the Pharisees have for you. This is the cup that the children of Adam and Eve have for you. This is the cup that our sins have for you. This is the cup that all this fallen creation has for you.”

And you see, Peter’s right. But Jesus is also right.

All our bad choices are encompassed by his good choice so: “*He who knew no sin became sin that we might become the righteousness of God.*” That’s *his* choice, his judgment. On the cross Jesus then gave up his spirit and descended into my life, and into your life. And that’s how He creates your eternal life. But as long as you refuse to live your life with him, you trap yourself in emptiness, and death, and hell. But to trust him now is to live your eternal life. It’s to go home to him and home to the person you truly are.

You see, what I’m saying is that every moment is a gift and through faith we unwrap that gift. We unwrap that gift in time. It’s the gift of your eternal life and there cannot be a better life than that life. There cannot be a better me than that me. The me that I Am has created.

Jeanne Guyon writes:

You must utterly believe that the circumstances of your life, that is, every minute of your life, as well as the whole course of your life—anything, yes, everything that happens—have all come to you by His will and by His permission. You must utterly believe that everything that has happened to you is from God and is exactly what you need.

That’s called faith, faith in grace.

You cannot create your life.

You can only receive your life by grace through faith,
and this faith is not even of yourself.

“You are satisfied (writes Guyon) because you know that whatever that moment has, it contains—in that instant—God’s eternal plan for you.”

That means, you have no regrets, no bitterness, no un-forgiveness carried from the past.

That means you have no anxiety about the future.

That means you are tasting every strawberry now.

You’re drinking the cup that the Father has given you.

So how do I know the cup that that the Father has for me? Listen closely: Every moment that you walk in faith, that moment is the cup and you’re drinking the cup. Your Father controls all moments, and He make all moments into a temporal cup to deliver an eternal

reality called faith to you, and *in you*, Christ *in you*, faith, hope, and love *in you*—His life *in you*.

Last week I ended by talking about why John 18:11 meant so much to me, and I told you my story because you have a similar story. You've lost a loved one or your business is falling apart and all of us one day will die. This life as we know it will come to an end.

I told you how I tried to rewrite my Father's story for I thought he drank the wrong cup, and how I thought I made my life and had it taken away because three-and-a-half years ago I was publically tried and excommunicated for my convictions about the power of grace. And I need to tell you: I think it was the worst experience of my life.

Well, it was a Sunday morning in worship just a few weeks before everything went down. It was just after communion while people were coming forward to eat the bread and drink the cup. My wife, Susan, all at once, grabbed my arm, and I remember I looked over, and I could tell she was really disturbed or bothered. Well maybe not bothered but in wonder over something that had happened. And she said to me, "Peter, I just saw your father." Now that was significant because my dad had died three-and-a-half years earlier and she said, "Peter, I just, I just saw your father. All at once I looked up and he was standing in front of us, and Peter he wasn't old. He was so full of life and his eyes were like on fire and he was so excited and he had like this bowl in his hand and he leaned forward and he said, 'Susan and Peter do not be afraid to drink the cup that the Lord has for you.'" And then he vanished.

Last week, I said I think I'm just beginning to understand what that means. I think this is what that means. Dad was saying, "Peter, this is the cup that the Lord has for you. Peter this is not the cup that the presbytery has for you. Peter, this is not the cup that the Pharisees or the religious leaders have for you. Peter, this is not the cup *you* have for you.

You know, Peter, this cup is constructed with your bad choices. It's constructed with other people's bad choices. It's constructed even with evil, but it's not the cup that evil has for you. It's not the cup that Judas has for you. It's not the cup the Pharisees have for you. It's not the cup that *chaos* has for you. Peter, this is the cup that the Lord has for you. That means, Peter, that this is the best cup. This is your best life now. This is your eternal life *now* so drink it, live it, live it without fear and this would be just like my dad to say, "And Peter, taste the strawberries along the way." You see, I missed so many strawberries.

Well, some of you hate your life, and you say, "I don't hate my life." Yeah you do, I bet you do 'cause you wish you had somebody else's life. But you need to *surrender* your life and then *thank God* for your life and your life then becomes the revelation of your eternal life and you cannot even imagine a better life than that.

Communion

So on the night that Jesus was betrayed, He took bread and broke it saying, "*This is my body given to you.*" And in the same manner after supper and having given thanks He took the cup and He said, "*This cup is the New Covenant in my blood, shed for the forgiveness of sins. Drink of it all of you.*" The Covenant is in my blood and the life is in the blood—eternal life poured into your life.

And so, would you close your eyes for just a minute 'cause I want to ask you this question again. Do you hate your life? Do you wish you had another life, another me? John 12 Jesus said this. Listen closely. "Whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life." You see your life in this world is that empty life, that sinful life. If you hate it, you surrender it, and then you keep it for eternal life. Then it becomes eternal life and then you love it. So think about your life.

I want you to think about all the places you think you failed and you did fail. All the places where you felt like a success and in reality maybe you failed even more miserably there. Think about the tragedies and think about the things that you consider a triumph. Do you hate your life?

Well, surrender your life and then God wants you to thank him for all your life. In fact, the Apostle Paul says, "*Thank him always and for everything.*" And so you say, "Do I think him for sin?" Well I don't think so because I don't think sin is really even there. The suffering produced by sin, the pain of sin, yeah thank him for all of it and when you do, it's your best life, it's your eternal life now.

So right now just repeat these words after me in the silence of your heart: "Father, I surrender my life and now Father I thank you for my life because I could not have a better life." In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Come to the table, tear off a piece of bread, dip it in the cup. Dark cups wine, light cups juice and ingest eternal life into your life.

Benediction

So I want to end by telling you what will and will *not* happen. Okay?

You will arrive on the 7th day in a new heaven and a new earth.

You will look around and see that the Lord really has made all things new.

You will see every creature in heaven on earth, under the earth, and sea

And you will see all that is in them praising the Lamb on the throne.

Every creature unique and yet every creature praising him.

You will stand before the throne of the King of Glory,

A slaughtered Lamb bleeding his life into all creation.

That will all happen.

This will not happen:

You will *not* look up at him and say,

"You could have done a better job with me. You could have given me different gifts."

"You gave Chris a really nice house in the mountains. You didn't give that gift to me."

"You gave that person children and husband. You didn't give that to me."

"You could have made it so I didn't get ex-communicated."

"You could have let me preach in the stadium."

"You could have given that to me. You could have done a better job with me."

That won't happen.

Instead, this will happen:

You'll look around surrounded by glorious people, unique people and you'll look up at the throne and you'll say, "Oh, God, you could not have made a better me."

And then a man standing next to you,

The apostle Paul will say, "Oh, God you couldn't have made a better me,

And Peter will say "God you could not have made a better me,"

And a guy, the thief from the cross who came to Jesus at the last seconds of his life will say, "Ah Jesus, you could not have made a better me."

And then you'll turn to that guy and say, "Hey, let me tell you about me."

And then he'll want to hear about you.

We will each testify to each other and that testimony will be worship and all that worship will rise up before the throne. You see, it's the worship of our lives.

I'm saying you have an eternal life and as long as you refuse to live your life with him, you trap yourself in darkness and death and hell, but when you live your life with him, you go home to him and you go home to him with who you really are so you might as well live that life right now.

So, in the name of Jesus, may you live your eternal life.

In other words, may you drink the cup every moment by Faith, in Jesus' Name. Amen.

Disclaimer: This document is a draft and has not been edited by the author. Therefore, there may be discrepancies. Some discrepancies may be minor; some may have to do with theology. When in doubt, please refer to the audio version of the sermon on this website and don't be shy about informing us of errors.