

Communion

Tucson, Arizona, USA
December 12, 1965

1 ... stirring message that Brother Pearry gave us just then from the Word of God. How true it is that we limit God and time God; and He's eternal. We can't do that. So, tonight we're facing something else now ... is communion.

Three years I waited for a church to come in Tucson, but it's here. We're here. So, we thank the Lord; He just let us wait till we can appreciate it now.

2 Now, there's one thing that I'd want to say just before we start the communion, is this: that I believe that we have seen enough in our day that we live in, that we ought to really give every ... all of our being to God. We should really serve God. I believe that He has blessed us with the direct answer to Scripture. As Brother Pearry gave it a few moments ago, that we are at that time. We're not blind; we see that we're here, we've arrived.

And we also can look around and see that the way that the human mind is leaving the people that we can't stay too much longer; we'd be in a complete insane institution—the whole world would be, see. So, we're at the end time.

3 Now—as Brother Pearry ended up there—seeing these things are true, see that they are true.... They're not myths. They're not just something that we imagine. They're something that's been directly given to us by the Word of God and manifested publicly before us, that we know we are here. We don't know how long now, because again we come back to a watch, you see—what time it is. But we know we're at the time. Whether God's time, I'd imagine....

Someone give a little analysis one time that said that if God put up with him according ... if He was to allot time.... One thousand years is just one day. So, if a man lives seventy years old, it'd just be few minutes of God's time, see. Well, it's said to be forty years, that wouldn't even mean time, hardly, He could bat his eye, see. See, just ... that's how quick it is, the whole thing, if it be allotted time—which He doesn't have any time. So, He just is eternal.

4 I believe it was Sarah back there ... or, no, it was Joseph the other night said to me, Brother Pearry, he said, "Daddy, when did God come on the scene? Where did He come from?" See? "He had to have a beginning, didn't He? Didn't He have to start?"

I said, "No. Anything that has a beginning has an end, but it's that which had not a beginning has no end." Of course, he's ten years old; that was kind of a real mouthful for him, see. How could he receive that, knowing that something never did begin? Not only to him, it is to me, see. It's a great big dose for me, how did it ever begin.

5 Now, we're fixing to observe something here that's really sacred.

I was called on a few days ago to some very fine Christian gentlemen that's never had this, and he understood that we taken communion literally. They take it what they call "spiritual communion." And which, as far as communion, I'd say all right, because communicate is "to talk to," see. And the brother give me this scripture, said, "Brother Branham, don't you think now...?"

Now, reason I'm saying this.... It's all right, Brother Pearry? See, that ... reason I'm saying this, so that you would understand what you're doing. You don't ... if you walk into anything blindly, you don't know what you're doing. You can't have even confidence if you don't know what you're doing. But you must understand what you are doing and why you're doing it.

He said, "Now, if we take the Word of God, isn't that God that we're taking?"

I said, "Exactly right, sir, it's true. But we read here that they actually ... Paul taught taking the literal Lord's supper. 'This do in remembrance of me,' said Jesus, 'As oft as you take it in remembrance of me, you show forth the Lord's death till He comes,'" see. Now, we are to take it.

6 We understand that St. Paul, who ordained it in the church, being the prophet of the New Testament.... Peter, James, John, all of them, they wrote (Matthew, Mark, Luke) what Jesus did, as scribes. But Paul set the thing in order; he was the prophet of the New Testament. Just as Moses went into the wilderness to receive the inspiration to write the five books of ... the first five books of the Bible, well, Paul also went into the desert and received inspiration from God to set the New Testament church in order and type it with the Old.

Under there they had the sacrificial lamb that Israel kept that for a memorial. It was actually used one time, coming out of Egypt. But then they kept that as a memorial all down through the age. Well, if the law being a shadow of things to come, you see....

Now, I do believe that communion (what we call communion, now) is the Lord's supper.

7 Now, we only have three physical divine orders left to us: one of them is communion; feet-washing; water baptism. That's the only three things. That's the perfection of the three, see. That's the only three orders we have. We realize that that was the issue given by St. Paul in the New Testament.

Now, if we would say the communion should just be taking the Word.... I don't believe anyone has a right to take the Lord's supper until he has taken the Word of the Lord into his heart, see, because.... I'll read something for you in a few moments and you'll see. Now, notice. Then, why then would we...?

On the same basis we could absolutely justify the Salvation Army. They do not believe in any form of water baptism, said, "We don't need it." Now, if we don't need water baptism, why are we baptized? Said, "The water can't save you; the blood saves you."

I'll agree with that. That's right, the blood saves you, not the water. But we must take the water as an outward emotion that an inwardly work of grace has been done, see. So must we on communion.

8 When we have taken the Lord, our sacrifice, into us, as a matter of spiritual birth into us, and His body—we live by Him by the Word—we also should symbolize it because it's a commandment. "Repent, every one of you and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins."

Paul said, "I have received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread, and brake it and gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take and eat, this do in remembrance of me.' For as often as you take this bread, you show forth His death till He comes." Now we find out that in that, they had people who come and....

9 This precious brother, a very dear brother, he came and he said, "I never did take it, Brother Branham. I don't understand what it is." Said, "I've been taught the other side."

I said, "But remember, we will admit that St. Paul set it in order in the early Christian church. They went from chur... from house to house, broke the bread with singleness of heart, and so forth. Now," I said, "he did put it in the church. Galatians 1:8, he said, 'If an angel from heaven comes and says anything else, let it be accursed,' you see—the same one that had them to be rebaptized again from the baptism of John, to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ."

You see, there are three things that we must do as symbols: the Lord's supper, feet-washing, water baptism, see.

10 He said, "Well, the...." Now, the Salvation Army takes it from the point, "The dying thief, when he died, he wasn't baptized yet. Jesus said he would be in heaven." That's exactly the truth. That's exact. But, you see, he only recognized Jesus right there in the hour he was dying, see. That's the only opportunity he had. He was a thief, he was away, he was out. And as soon as he seen that life, he recognized it: "Lord, remember me!" And Jesus.... That was truth.

But to you and I who know that we should be baptized and refuse to do it, then that'll be between you and God. Same thing in communion.

Now, when we take this communion, it isn't just the thing saying, "I'm coming up here and going to eat some bread, and I believe I'm a Christian." But, if you noticed, the Bible said, "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily shall be guilty of the blood and the body of the Lord." You've got to live a life before the people, that ... and before God and the people, that shows that you are sincere.

11 (Now, just a moment longer.) Now, in the Old Testament when the sacrifice was made a statute or an ordinance.... And so is water baptism an ordinance, so is feet-washing an ordinance, so is the Lord's supper an ordinance. "Blessed is he that does all of His ordinances, keeps all of His statutes, all of His commandments, that he might have a right to enter into the tree of life."

Now, notice in this now, that in that first ... when it was first an ordinance of God to bring a sacrifice to the church, and ... to the temple and the altar, and offer your gift for your sins, the sacrifice of a lamb.... Well, I can just imagine seeing some Jewish brother coming down the road, knowing that he was guilty, and he goes to the altar ... or brings his fat ox or a bullock, or whatever he had, or a ram, lamb, something. He had brought it down the road just as sincere as he could come. He walked up there, keeping God's ordinance just as sincerely as he could.

Then he laid his hands upon it, confessing his sins, and the priest placing this (his sins) upon the lamb, and the lamb's throat was cut, and then died for him. As he laid there (the little lamb), kicking and bleeding, his hands being full of blood, and it flying all over him, the little lamb bleating, dying, he would realize that he had sinned and something had to die in his place. Therefore, he was offering this lamb's death for his death, see. The lamb died in his place. Then the man done it with sincerity, with deepness of his heart.

12 Finally, over and over it went again, over and over it kept going, until finally it become a tradition. The commandment of God became a tradition to the people. And then here he come down, "Well, let's see, this is so-and-so today, maybe I better go down. Yeah, I better offer a bullock." He went down, "Well, Lord, here's my bullock." See, there's no sincerity in it, there's no understanding to it.

Now, we don't want to take communion like that. That's the same thing as we come to the Lord's table.

Isaiah 35 ... no, I beg your pardon, Isaiah 60.... Let me take that back. I believe it's Isaiah 28 is where we find this. I'm pretty sure that's the right chapter. He said, "Precept must be upon precept; and line upon line upon line; here a little, there a little. Hold fast to that what's good. With stammering lips and other tongues will I speak to this people. And this is the rest."

He said, "All the tables of the Lord has become full of vomit. Who can I teach doctrine? Who can I make to understand?" See? (I think that was the right scripture, Isaiah 28.) "Who can I make understand doctrine?" See, the tables.

13 Now, we find out today that this great thing that we're fixing to do tonight in commemoration of His death; and His body that we believe that we eat daily—or just got through eating, as our brother preached to us, taking the Word of God.... We believe it with all of our heart. We see it manifested; we see it given to us; we see it vindicated; we feel it in our lives. And we must come to this with a deep conscience of what we're doing, not just because it's an order.

You go in a church, and many times they got out an old soda cracker or some kind of a something, break it up, and light bread or something, and break it up; and people who smoke, drink, everything else, because they're a member of the church they come and take the Lord's supper. Well, that's filthiness before God!

14 Even the sacrifice.... Said, "Your holy days and your sacrifice become a stench in my nose." Yet He ordained them to make that sacrifice. But the way they treated it, it become a stench (stink in His nose, His nostrils), the very sacrifice that He ordained.

That's the way we take the Word of God. Too many Christians today (so-called) does that. We stand up here and teach this Word, and say, "Jesus Christ isn't the same yesterday, today, and forever," and teach the things that He promised us that He would honor, and say, "Oh, well, that was for something else." Our solemn worship has become a stink in His nose. He will not receive it, by no means. That's the reason, by our traditional habits....

15 You don't take the Lord's supper by a tradition. You take it because it's the love of God in your heart, in keeping the commandments of God, see. That's what you take it for.

So, if you don't take it in sincerity—just, it's a tradition, "Well, our church observes communion once every Sunday, or once every month, or twice a year;" and you go up, say, "Well, it's my time," and then take the communion—why, it's a stink to God. See, that's just a tradition.

Even like anything else, you've got to be sincere. God wants the depths of your heart. You remember, the very God that brought you here on earth is the one you're serving.

You're doing this because He said so, because it's His order. Then we want to come up with deepness of sincerity, knowing that by God's grace that we have been saved. And we love Him and we feel His presence, and we see it change our lives. Our whole being is changed. We're different people. We don't live like we used to. We don't think like we used to.

16 Like in the book here, in the spot there.... We was talking about the two books being one, the book of life. The first book of life coming up was when you were born. That was your natural birth, see. But then one time, way back down in there, there was a little grain of life (as I've explained to some of the young sisters at the house this afternoon). See, there's a little grain of life laying there that you'd wonder: "Where did it come from? What ... these strange things...?"

I was saying this, taking for myself, like you was going to say, "William Branham. Well, forty years ago the William Branham isn't the same one tonight"; and somebody back there would say, "He was a rank rascal," see, because I was born of Charles and Ella Branham. In there, nature, I was a sinner. I came to the world a liar, and all the habits of the world laid right in me. But down in there too was another nature present, predestinated. It was in there by God. In this same body, two natures in there.

Well, I only catered to one. As it growed, I gooded as a baby, "Dad-da." First thing you know, I become a liar, become everything else that's a sinner, because I raised up that way. But down in there was a little speck of life all the time.

17 I used to remember, as a little boy (I hope I'm not holding you too long. But knowing....) sitting out

on the creek bank, and I'd sit there and look around at nighttime. Pop and Mom, they're gone on now to their rest. And them days, they were sinners; there was no Christianity in our homes at all. And, oh, my, drinking, and parties, and carrying on.... It made me sick. I'd take my lantern and my dog and go to the woods to stay all night. In the wintertime I'd hunt till the party was over, maybe daylight in the morning. Come home, wouldn't be over, I've laid on top of a shed and sleep, waiting for daylight to break.

Then I'd think of how that times (then being out there in the summertime), get my sticks and put them down for a little windbreak, where if it rained; lay there and have the poles sticking in the water, fishing, my old coon dog laying there. I'd say, "Looky here. You know, last winter I camped right here one night. I built a fire right here when I was waiting for my old dog here to tree, and I had a fire here. It was froze five inches deep in the ground. But, little flower, where did you come from? Where did you come from? Who come out here and planted you? And what hothouse did they bring you out of? Or what about it? Where'd you come from?" See, that little flower.... I'd say "Why, it was froze, and everything, and I built a fire on top here. Besides the freezing element, there was a heat element laying here on a big old log where I burned here. And yet here you are, you're alive. Where did you come from?"

18 What was it? There was another William Branham, see. A little spot of eternal life down there from the genes of God, the word of God that was placed in there. Each one of you can think of similar things, see. It was working.

Then I looked up to the trees and I'd think, "Leaf, I seen you fall off last year, and what are you back there again? Where did you come from? What brought you here?" See, it was that eternal life working in the body.

Now, then one day as I walked on, that voice talking, "Don't never smoke, drink," so forth.... And the young fellows and I got older. See, there was something moving.

But yet, all at once I looked up, and I said, "I'm not the son of Charles and Ella Branham. There's something calling." Like my little eagle: "I'm not a chicken. There's something up yonder, somewhere. O great Jehovah, whoever you are, open up! I want to come home. There's something in me calling."

Then I was born again. That little life was laying there; the life of water was poured upon it, then it begin to grow. Now that old life was forgiven, put in the sea of God's forgetfulness, to never be remembered against me no more, see. Now we stand justified—as though we never had sinned—in the presence of God.

19 Then, when we come to the Lord's table, we must come in reverence, love, and respect, of "Look where we would have been if it hadn't been for Him," see. Look where we would've....

Therefore, Paul, I think, in saying this, "Wherefore, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for the other," that is, other words, just wait a few minutes, pray, check yourself out. And if you know a brother is in there, just about to do something that's wrong, or something, you pray for him, too. See, "Tarry one ... the other," wait just a minute, pray. If there's any feelings between you or something, don't do it. Don't do it—go make that right first, see. Go straighten that up first, because we want to come here just as pure as we can be, and our thoughts of one another and to God, and to each other, and then we come in fellowship around the table of the Lord, see.

20 And we do this because that we are giving thanks to Him among one another, eating the bread between each other, drinking the wine between each other, as His blood and His flesh.

"Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, you have no life in you," see. You see, that's what the Bible said. Except you do it, there's no life. You see? You are then, more or less, showing you are ashamed to identify yourself as a Christian because of the life that you live. And then this is really the showdown. Then if you don't do it, you have no life. If you do do it unworthily, you are guilty of the body of the Lord.

21 Same thing in water baptism. If we say, "We believe on Jesus Christ, He saved us from sin, and we are baptized in the name of Jesus Christ," why, we bring disgrace to Him—we do the things that's wrong—and we'll have to pay for that. And another thing, when we do that, we are trying to profess one thing and do another. That's the trouble of us today.

What I think ... I'm saying us—me and the church that the Lord God has let me speak to in these last hours—that we believe we're in the closing time. We believe that God has give us a message. It's been ordained of God, it's been proven of God, it's been showed of God. Now, we must come to Him with reverence and with love, and with purity of heart and mind and soul.

22 You know, the hour will soon arise when right among us will be ... the Holy Spirit will speak out like it did in Ananias and Sapphira. See, that hour is arriving, see. And we are.... Now, you just remember that,

see, that God is going to dwell among His people. That's what He wants to do now.

We can receive the message as saying.... If I was a young man and hunting for a wife, and I could find a wife, I said, "She's just perfect. She's a Christian. She's a lady. She's all this, I got confidence." No matter how much confidence, how much I think she's nice, I've got to receive her, she's got to receive me, see, upon these vows.

Well, it's the same thing we find in the message. We see it's right. We see God vindicates it's right. It's perfectly right. Year after year, year after year, it continues right, continues right. Everything it says happens just exactly the way He said. Now, we know it's right; but, see, don't do it from an intellectual standpoint. If you do, you got a secondhanded religion. We don't want a secondhanded religion—something that somebody else has experienced and we are living off of their testimony.

23 As ... I believe it was Jesus said to Pilate (something—a word I was thinking—he said there, just a few moments ago), "Who told you that, or was it revealed to you? How did you know these things?" In other words (I don't know just what the word is now; it's been a long time since I read it), but, "How did you notice what ... who revealed this to you? [It was about Him being the Son of God.] Who revealed it to you? Did some man tell you that? Or," as Jesus said, "is it my Father in heaven which has revealed it to you?" See? "How did you learn it? A secondhand? Or is it a perfect revelation from God?"

Is this communion just something I go up for, an order, say, "Well, the rest of them take this, I will, too"? It's a revelation that I am part of Him and I'm part of you, and I love you and I love Him, and we're taking this together as a symbol of our love to God, and our love and fellowship to one another.

24 Now, I want to read some from the Scripture. And then I guess.... Whichever way Brother Pearry desires today.... I wish you'd read it with me, if you got your Bible. I Corinthians, the eleventh chapter, and begin with the twenty-third verse.

And then also, at our Tabernacle, we've always observed this and feet-washing, always, because they go hand in hand together. I believe the brother announced that Wednesday night (because of the crowds and you don't have enough room to get the people in for feet-washing), they're going to observe this Wednesday night.

25 Now, twenty-third verse of the eleventh chapter of I Corinthians, listen at Paul now. Now, remember and keep this in mind, Galatians 1:8: "If we or an angel from heaven preaches any other gospel unto you [than this gospel that he had preached], let him be accursed," see.

For I have received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:

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

Now, let me stop right here, you see. But taking the body of the Lord Jesus Christ in this communion does not mean that that communion is the literal body of Christ. That's Catholic. I do not believe that that's right. I believe it's only an ordinance that God made with us, see; it isn't the actual body. Now, it's really a little piece of kosher bread. It's just an ordinance.

26 Neither do I believe that the baptism of Jesus Christ (in the name of Jesus Christ) in water does forgive your sins. I do not believe that you ... I believe you could be baptized all day long.... Now, I know that there's perhaps people sitting here who come from the Apostolic church ... I mean, or the United Pentecostal church, which they teach that. But, you see, I do not believe that the water forgives sins. Or, if it was, then Jesus died in vain, see. I believe that it's only an ordinance of God, see, to show that you have been forgiven. But to be baptized for regeneration, no, I don't believe that. I don't believe that water forgives sins.

Neither do I believe that this bread and wine has anything to do with you, only keeping an ordinance that God has ordained for us to do, see. That's right. I believe water baptism is the same thing. I believe it's compelling to us to do it, that He had done it all for our example. And He done this for our example, and He washed feet for our example.

27 Now, "After the same manner also," twenty-fifth verse:

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

For as oft [remember, now] For as oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew forth the Lord's death till he come. [How long? Until He comes, see],

Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty

of the body and the blood of the Lord.

Let me stop just a minute. The reason he said this.... You notice in another verse here, another chapter, that he said, "I understand when you come together, you're eating ... even getting drunk at the Lord's table." They misunderstood it, you see. They just gluttoned in, see. Just like people are doing today, just live any kind of life and take it, see. He said, "You got homes to eat in, see. But, this is an ordinance that we should keep, see." Now:

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup.

For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

28 What are you? You're a Christian. You live before everybody as a Christian. And if you take that and don't live as a Christian, you're not discerning the Lord's body. You're putting a stumbling block in somebody else's way, see, as they see you trying to do that and then not living what you're supposed to live, see. You're not discerning the Lord's body. Now, watch what the curse of it is:

For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. [The right translation of that word, Brother Pearry, is "dead." See, many are dead.]

For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. [If we judge ourselves, we won't be judged.]

But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. [See, not any attach to the world.]

Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for the other.

And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest I will set in order when I come.

29 Now, in other words, don't just come to take it as a.... As I said awhile ago, about what the Jews, their sacrifice, they.... It was wonderful, it was given by God. But it got to a place where they didn't do it in sincerity and reverence and in order. Then it become just a ... it become a stench in His nose.

Now, the same thing is by our coming to take the Lord's supper, that we must come knowing what we are doing. Just like when you go into the water to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, you know what you're doing: you're putting on to the church what God has put in you—Christ.

When we take this, it shows to the church that "I believe every word of God. I believe that He is the bread of life that come from God out of heaven. I believe every word that He says is the truth, and I live by it to the best of my knowledge, God being my judge. Therefore, before my brothers, before my sisters, I do not swear, I do not curse, I do not do these things, because I love the Lord; and the Lord knows it and bears me record. Therefore, before you, I take the parcel of His body to know that I am not condemned with the world." See, there you are; then it's a blessing.

30 And, remember, I could give many testimonies on this, where I've took that and explained it in a sickroom, and seen them healed.

Remember, when Israel taken the type of this, they had journeyed forty years in the wilderness and their clothes never even wore out; and they come out without one feeble one among them with two million people—as a type of this. Well, what will the antitype do? If the body of a sacrificial animal did that for them, what would the body of Jesus Christ, Emmanuel, do for us?

Let's just be reverent when you come. Let us be just as reverent as we know how to come.



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Sermons By
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 "... in the days of the voice ..." Rev. 10:7