

“How Do You Keep Christ in Christmas?”

Mark 14:17-26

Preached by

Dr. Robert F. Browning, Pastor

First Baptist Church

Frankfort, Kentucky

Communion Devotion

It is appropriate this morning we have the communion table next to the Christmas tree in our sanctuary. This table reminds us that Christmas is not all about us, a message we often fail to hear during this busy month.

For many of us, our earliest memories of Christmas revolve around our wish lists. We spent a big portion of our time dreaming of the toys and games we wanted Santa to bring.

As adults, we still dream about what we want for Christmas. We have favorite foods we long to eat, music we hope to hear, movies we like to watch and gifts we look forward to unwrapping.

This time of year, it is easy to get all wrapped up in ourselves, especially if we listen to the ads which bombard the airways. They appeal to our insatiable desire for more stuff through an endless array of sights and sounds.

And yet, this morning we cannot look at this beautiful Christmas tree without also seeing this table. As we gaze upon it, we can't help but notice how sparse it looks compared to this huge tree loaded with ornaments.

There are no decorations on this table. Instead, there are trays containing tiny pieces of bread and little cups of juice. **What is this all about?**

Everything on this table symbolizes giving, sharing, others and sacrifice.

“This bread is my body given **for you**. Do this in remembrance of me,” Jesus said to his disciples gathered in the Upper Room just before he was arrested and crucified.

“This cup is the blood of the new covenant shed for the remission of **your sins**. Drink it in remembrance of me,” he told them.

It is hard to be self-absorbed and ignore pleas for help from our neighbors when you hear these words from our Lord. Somehow, a Christmas which focuses solely upon our wishes and fantasies doesn't seem as important.

What does become more important the longer someone gazes at this table? I know what it is for me: caring, sharing, giving, serving, helping, healing, listening, loving, hugging, welcoming, complimenting, encouraging, forgiving and expressing gratitude.

The more time you spend around this table, the more likely you will discover one of the most important things about Christmas. **Christmas is more about others than you, and the way to keep Christ in Christmas is through sacrifice and service.**

A young boy was admiring a brand new sports car sitting by the curb when the owner came out of his house.

“Is this your car, Mister?” he asked while looking the car up and down.

“It sure is. My brother gave it to me for Christmas,” the man replied.

“You mean to tell me your brother GAVE you this car. I can't believe this,” the boy shouted in amazement.

Then, this boy said something which caught the owner of this new car completely by surprise. He expected this young fellow to say, “I wish I had a brother like this,” but he didn't. Instead, without hesitating he said, “I wish I could be a brother like this one day.”

His words, I believe, capture the true spirit of Christmas.