

## Amending Your Life

John 5:39

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

A lot of us think that there's nothing that remains the same in this world. That everything is always changing. But there are things that remain the same and have always been the same. I think you felt the same excitement as I did when we got this old Geneva Bible in England. This actual Bible itself was made in 1608 and it just overwhelms us in our modern society to think that here, I am actually touching a book that was produced and made, by another person who believed in Jesus in 1608. That's over 380 years ago.

It just overwhelms you that this Bible was actually in existence when Shakespeare was writing his plays. This Bible was in existence before John Milton read it, hundreds of years before Ben Franklin was born, long before Abraham Lincoln was born, long before America was America.

This Bible was being read by somebody like us. That just spans the centuries so fast, doesn't it? There we are, back almost 400 years with this one book. In those same days the English prayer book was written and this is a copy of that English prayer book.

The fact is, that for 1600 years before this prayer book was written, people like us gathered round the table like this. The amazing fact is that over that whole 1600 year period, there wasn't one night when some group of Christians somewhere did not celebrate the communion of our Lord Jesus Christ or the last supper or the mass. Not one night has passed since the first night this supper was celebrated by Jesus with His disciples, not one night has passed, but somebody somewhere in the world has observed the communion of the Lord Jesus Christ and yet in 1600, people used these same words.

So a priest would stand up in an old England church and he would say these words as I am saying them to you, "Dearly beloved in the Lord, Ye that mind to come to the Holy Communion of the body and blood of our Savior Christ must consider how St. Paul exhorts all persons diligently to try and examine themselves before they presume to eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For as the benefit is great, if with a true penitent heart and lively faith, we receive that holy sacrament, for then we spiritually eat the flesh of Christ and drink His blood, then we dwell in Christ and Christ in us.

We are one with Christ and Christ with us. So is the danger great if we receive the same unworthily, but then we are guilty of the body and blood of Christ, our savior. We eat and drink our own damnation not considering the Lord's body. We can kindle God's wrath against us. We provoke Him to plague us with diverse diseases and sundry kinds of death.

Judge therefore yourselves, that you be not judged of the Lord. Repent you truly, for your sins past. Have a lively and steadfast faith in Christ, our savior. Amend your lives and be in perfect charity with all men. So shall you be meet partakers of these holy mysteries and above all things, you must give most humble and hearty thanks to God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost for the redemption of the world by the death and passion of our savior Christ.

Both God and man, who did humble Himself even to the death upon the Cross for us miserable sinners,

who lay in darkness and the shadow of death that He might make us the children of God and exult us to everlasting life and to the end that we should always remember the exceeding great love of our Master and only savior Jesus Christ thus dying for us. And there are numerable benefits, which by His precious blood shedding, He has obtained for us.

They have instituted and ordained holy mysteries, as pledges of His love and for a continual remembrance of His death to our great and endless comfort. To Him therefore, with the Father and the Holy Ghost let us give as we are most bound and continual thanks, submitting ourselves wholly to His holy will and pleasure and studying to serve Him in true holiness and righteousness all the days of our lives.

So, that's what each of us is to do. It doesn't matter whether you're a member of a church. It doesn't matter if this is your first Sunday here. If you take this communion in that way, then the Creator of the world forgives you for all the sins that you have ever done in your life and He receives you to Himself as His own dear son, as His own dear daughter and He will protect you and guide you throughout the rest of your life, that's His promise.

So loved ones if you say, "What must I do?" amend your lives. Change your life. If God tells you there's something wrong in your life, amend it. Stop doing it or start doing it. Amend your lives and be in perfect charity with all men. That means if you have anything against anybody or if you have any conflict with anybody, put it right today or tomorrow at the latest. But be in perfect charity and this moment if you have hate in your heart or resentment or criticism, stop it, this moment. That's what it means be in perfect charity. Stop the hatred. Stop the resentment- no more arguing about it. Stop it this minute and be in perfect charity with all men. So shall you be meet partakers of these holy mysteries.

If you are ready to repent of your sins and to change your life then you can come to God this morning and say, "Lord, I ask You to forgive me for all my sins because of Jesus and I ask You to pour His spirit into my heart so that I may live like Him". That's what you do, and he does. He answers you. He brings the supernatural spirit into your life that changes it. That's His promise. I can testify that He does it. He'll do it for you.

Loved ones, I ask all of you to stand in a moment so that nobody will feel out of place or feel victimized. But I would ask you to think very seriously before you take the words upon your lips or the words into your hearts that I am going to speak. Listen to the words and say, "Am I ready to do that?" and then if you are, take the bread and the wine when it comes around. If you aren't, don't take the bread and wine. Don't eat and drink damnation unto your own soul.

There's one more thing. Some of you say, "I don't feel I am good enough". If you feel you're good enough, then you're not good enough. But if you feel you are a wretched sinner, and you are ready to admit and forsake the sin, then know that the body and blood of Jesus is for you. As you take the bread and the wine into your body, so His spirit will come into your spirit and will begin to move in your life. Now will you stand for the invitation?

You that do truly and earnestly repent of your sins and are in love and charity with your neighbors and intend to lead a new life following the commandments of God and walking from henceforth in His Holy ways, draw near with faith and take this holy sacrament to your comfort and make your humble confession unto Almighty God.

Let's be seated as we pray.

We do not presume to come to this thy table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy table. But thou are the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy: Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so by faith to receive thy Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, that the bread which we break may be unto us the communion of His Body, and the cup of blessing which we bless may be the communion of His Blood, and that we may evermore dwell in Him and He in us.

The Lord Jesus, on the night in which He was betrayed, took bread; and broke it and said, "This is My body which is given for you, this do, in remembrance of Me." In like manner, He took the cup after supper saying, "This is the cup of the new covenant in My blood, this do, as often as you drink it", for as often as you eat the bread and drink the cup you proclaim the Lord's death till He come.