

## Communion: The Holy Spirit in You

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

This table means this; that God himself, our God who made us, is standing before us this morning and he's saying, "Here, see the holes in my hands. See the hole in my side. Now this is what you have done to me and I still love you, and I still call you to come to me." And that's what has happened.

It's nothing less than that, that our God stands here, our God who has made the whole universe and who has created us, he stands before us here and he says that.

So he says, "I know what you are. I know it, you can see how I know it, because there is not one thing that you have done that I have not borne the results of that in my own self, in my Son and yet, I love you and I want you still as my own. And these wounds that you see are not just in these hands, these wounds I have felt for centuries. These wounds I felt at the very beginning before you were ever born, before you even existed in my Son. I felt these wounds because when I had my Son I knew that I would make you in him and I knew what you would do, and I knew that I would have to bear that if this was to be real at all. If I were to know you as my own children and I was to understand you, and feel for you, and have a real relationship with you, and you were to have a real relationship with me, then I knew what you would do and that I would have to face what you would do and what you would do to me. To make it real it had to be like that. And so these wounds that you see here, these I felt back when I made you. Long ago before the world was when I conceived of my own dear son I conceived of you being created in him and I conceived of him having to bear you and to bear your death, and to be raised himself, and to bear the pain of your resurrection. And now I stand before you saying, 'Here I am. I'm still bearing those things.' So you can see how warm my love is towards you."

And of course, for our dear Father it's been a long, long journey. In his own infinite mind it measures only a millisecond but we can see the centuries that have passed in this world. We can see even the years that have passed in our own lives and it has taken all that time for all that pain to work itself out. And our Father has felt everything that we have done. We may be horrified at that and yet in a way, in a strange way, we're so grateful that somebody in this universe actually knows every thought that has ever gone through our minds. Every good thought, and every bad thought, everything that we have ever done, there's somebody who actually has not only known it all but has felt it all and has experienced it all.

And of course, it's beyond our understanding that that one should still love us and should still want us for himself. And so in a sense it's just been a long, long trail you know. Right from the moment that God made us and created us in Christ, right through the early years and then the moment when Jesus himself in 29 AD was crucified, and then through all these years, up through these years. And all this time our Father has been waiting for the fulfillment that he had planned to take place and that fulfillment was that all of us whom he had ever created in Christ would experience the death and the destruction, and the recreation in Christ making us new creatures and bringing us around so that eventually we would return into his own heart.

And that's why there's a word that is used in regard to the communion and in Greek it's [anamnesis], a word that could be probably put into English something like that. And it's in that phrase you remember, do this in remembrance of me. And the Greek word remembrance is not only a word that looks back to the past but it's do this in remembrance of me as a memorial that you'll keep until I come again. And so it's do this in remembrance of me for as often as you eat the bread

and drink the cup you proclaim the Lord's death till he come. So that it's looking forward to this marriage feast of the lamb that God has been creating for centuries and is looking forward to the fulfillment of.

And that's part of what the last few words in that verse in Ephesians means because you remember, the spirit is the earnest or the guarantee of our inheritance. And then it says, "For the ransoming of its possession." And that's the literal translation of the Greek, "For the ransoming of its possession." This ransoming that has taken all this time, this ransom will be fulfilled when we enter into its possession, when we come into the presence of God and see him face-to-face, and experience all the ransoming or the redemption of our bodies that will have no more sickness, there will be no more tears, there will be no more worry or sadness, there will be no more misjudgments. We will come into the place where we will see Jesus as he is and we will see God as he is, and we will see each other clearly, and we will enter into the possession of our inheritance.

And that all has been taking place and is on its way to being fulfilled now. And so in a real sense actually, this that we do each month is part of the earnest of our inheritance. It's part of that down payment, it's part of that guarantee, that partial experience of heaven here on earth that we will have. And of course, part of the movement of God's Spirit in our own hearts as we realize that yes, he has borne this and he has borne these wounds for us, and he has borne all that we have done to him. And he really now stands before us and says, "Beat me to death if you want. Beat me to death if you want. I love you. I still love you. Now, do what you want."

And the movement of love and gratitude in our hearts that we feel when we hear those words, that is part of the earnest of the spirit. That is part of the guarantee that the Holy Spirit within us gives that we are, if you like, on our way to glory. The last word in that verse of Ephesians is for the praise of his glory. His glory is God as he really is, God as he is. And we're beginning to know him better than we did last week, better than we did the year before, better than we did five years ago, but then we will see him as he really is and we will know him as he really is and that's his glory.

His glory is not an exaggeration, or not something that we make up as a hyperbole to make him seem better than he is. His glory is him as he is and so we catch glimpses of it now, and we catch glimpses of his incredible condensation to us, you know. Beyond words, who else has a good who says, "Beat me to death if you want, but I love you." And so we'll see him.

In a sense, yes the wounds will be healed and yet in a sense those will always be dear wounds to us because they'll be the wounds that gave us the confidence and the desire to give ourselves up to him because he so obviously had given himself up to us for the ransoming for the possession of our inheritance, for the praise of his glory.

Let us pray.