

Luke 22:14-20  
Remember/Re-member  
08.27.23

Whenever I eat a hot, flaky, homemade biscuit  
With a big chunk of butter on it  
It takes me back to my grandparents' farmhouse.

My grandmother continued to use her wood stove for years  
Up to and even after grandpa bought her an electric range.

I remember so well its central location in the kitchen.

Grandma said there were three things  
She had to use her woodstove for.

She had to bake her biscuits in it.

She had to make Grandpa's toast in it  
Complete with it chunks of homemade butter.

And she liked her coffee hot  
And sat the pot on it throughout the day.

That last cup was a zinger!

To this day, a good biscuit takes me  
Back to her kitchen and wood range  
Down on the farm in Bedford County, VA.

What about you?  
What foods take you back in memory?

In the book, *Remembrance of Things Past*,  
French author Marcel Proust wrote about a man  
Who took one bite of madeleine dipped in tea

Madeleine is a small sponge-like cake  
Made in the shape of a shell.

He took one bite of madeleine dipped in tea  
And was immediately transported back in time.

This experience developed a label.

It's called the Proustian or madeleine moment  
That particular bond between taste buds and memories.

We remember food  
Both the negative and positive experiences.

Like the last grouper on the "catch of the day" menu  
In a little dive on the Gulf shore  
That to this day was the best fish I've ever eaten.

Or the chick peas I threw up when the flu bug attacked me.

To this day, I have no appetite for chick peas.

Or the shore lunch on a secluded lake in Canada.

Food triggers memory the same as smell

Taste and smell both  
Are connected to the same region of the brain as memory.

It's no wonder, then, Jesus used bread and wine  
As a way to keep his memory alive.

Ever since, Christians  
Feel the poignancy of the moment  
Every time Communion is taken.

It takes us back to that upper room  
And Jesus' last supper meal  
And the institution of the bread and cup.

Grateful hearts will always remember sacrificial love.

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To remember, from a faith perspective  
Is not just about recalling events out of the past.

Remembering, from a biblical point of view  
Relives a defining moment or event from the past.

For instance

After the flood, God told Noah that never again  
Would God destroy the earth by flood.

**Genesis 9:16 CEV When I see the rainbow in the sky, I  
will always remember the promise that I have made to  
every living creature.**

Ever since, anytime the people of the covenant  
See a rainbow in the sky  
They remember God's promise.

It is a present and visible reminder of God's love.

THE defining moment for the Hebrew people  
The moment they will always remember  
For generations to come

Came in the Exodus from Egypt.

It is memorialized in the Passover meal  
That Jews actively celebrate yearly.

To them, it is not dry and dead history but living memorial.

Not just an event to be learned  
But a dynamic history to be lived

In its remembrance they relive the redemption history  
That identifies them as a people.

They use the meal as a remembrance  
Of that night 3500 years ago.  
When they ate the Passover meal  
Marking the end of 400 years of slavery.

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Jesus used the occasion of the Last Supper  
The night before his death  
As a memorial for his disciples.

He used symbols to instill memories.

He washed the disciples' feet  
To teach a servant/leader approach to discipleship

He used food as reminders

They shared the Passover meal together  
Remembering God's redemptive history  
In making Israel a nation from an enslaved people

It bonded them together as God's people.

Jesus created his own memorial.

He took bread  
And after he'd given thanks  
He broke it and gave it to them, saying

**Luke 22:19b NRSVUE "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."**

And Jesus, after supper, did the same with a cup of wine.

**Luke 22:20b NRSVUE "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood."**

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Do this in remembrance of me.

And down through the centuries  
Believers have done just that.

Gather together sharing the bread and cup  
As an act of remembrance.

In doing so, we are actively engaged in living its history.

Whereas, the disciples didn't understand all what was to be  
They understood the somber mood of Jesus  
And the sacredness of the hour.

Communion is always a sobering reminder  
Of God's love sacrificial love.

We remember the suffering and the humiliation  
The torture and the agonizing death on the cross  
Of our dear Lord and Savior.

We remember the crowd's bloodthirsty cries  
And the disciples' fear and absence.

It is a riveting yet disturbing scene.

However, Jesus doesn't just want us to remember his death.

He didn't say,  
"Do this in remembrance of my agonizing death"

Jesus said,  
"Do this in remembrance of me"

Of me!!!  
My life, my ministry, my healings, my teachings  
Remember that as well!

In Communion  
We remember his birth, life, and his death  
His teachings, healings and miracles.

We remember his continuing presence  
In the form of the Holy Spirit.

And reflect on God's goodness in our own lives.

Our own moments of salvation  
Our own coming to faith  
Our own baptism and first communion  
Our own walk with Christ.

It all becomes part of remembrance.

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Jesus meant Communion to be taken together in community.

It is best when done in the gathered body.

Certainly, there are times  
In homes and hospitals when it is necessary  
To serve Communion to an individual.

But it is best a shared event.

Because God not only saves individuals  
God want to save a people.

It is all a part of actively remembering  
The life and death of Jesus  
And our walk with him.

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My own salvation experience took place  
During a Communion Service  
Where I first felt God's remarkable saving graces.

Or like what Don Zeigler once shared with me.

He said, that one time, in the stillness of Communion  
As he held the cup of juice

He said he could see his heartbeat  
Pulsating ripples in the cup's juice.

I asked Don, was he sure it was his own heartbeat?

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Remembering faith experiences  
Is so vital to the nurturing of our souls.

Because

*We're not just remembering.*

*We're re-membering.*

Individually

We renew, we refresh, and we repent

And as a gathered community of faith

We re-member, we return, and we rebuild.

Through God's redemptive and redeeming love.

Communion is a memorial

A time to remember

And a time to re-member.