



Core Values
two: communion
September 24, 2017
Courage Church, Detroit, MI
scriptures: 1 Corinthians
11:17-29, Exodus 12, Luke
22:15



We are well on our way into our series on our values... we certainly, in these weeks will NOT be able to cover everything that do value... because we value a lot. But we are trying to cover as much as we can, and in a way that is easy to understand and to remember... so just for a brief recap,

Core values are the fundamental beliefs of a person or organization...

and two weeks ago we kicked off our series by talking about WHY... why we have Core Values, and even more importantly, why do we do what we do? Why are we church? Why Detroit?

and we answer that question, with what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5... he says that “you have been given the ministry of reconciliation...” he goes on to say “Christ is reconciling the world back to God, by NOT counting their trespasses against them” and WE ARE AMBASSADORS of that reconciliation!

So, with such an enormous task laid out for us in those passages... that we are Christ’s ambassadors... we are the hands and feet of Jesus here on planet earth in this city and in this time in history... we said last week that it would only make sense that our first Core Value would be the name of our church: COURAGE.

Because if you are a cowardly ambassador, you are misrepresenting Christ, and you very well could miss the chance to lead someone into an eternal decision for Jesus... there is just no time for that.

Today we are continuing on... and as I was praying about the best way to frame this, the word that I felt God was impressing on my heart, as surprising as this may be, is the word “communion.”

I don’t know if “communion” is a typical core value or not... but we certainly VALUE it here...

You know, when Dawn and I first got here, I think about 3-4 weeks in, we went to our leadership team and we said “we would like to see communion offered EVERY SINGLE WEEK” - for a lot of reasons... one of them being, we always want Jesus, and the cross in particular, to be central to every single thing that we do...

and by taking a moment out of each service to take the little piece of bread, and dip it into the cup, we give everyone a reflective opportunity to be reminded of what Jesus did for them on that old rugged cross.

I love what Drew said a couple weeks ago before we took it, he said “we are joining with churches all around the world this morning, in this.”

But communion is more than just something we take every Sunday for one minute and move on. it is more than the bread. it is more than the cup.

and the first written account we get of the Lord’s Supper, is given in direct response to a really big problem that was going on in the church that Paul was writing too...

and it is a problem that, unfortunately, is alive and well in our world in 2017... and that is the problem of “divisions.”

One side over here, another over here...

Republicans and democrats.

Rich and poor.

black and white

Christians and Catholics...

We have even managed to be divided, ON COMMUNION. The Catholic church insistent that the wine and bread are literally Jesus’ body... the protestant church equally as insistent that those elements only REPRESENT His body.

We, as people, tend to migrate toward people who believe like us, think like us, act like us, and even look like us.

and that *is* the world we live in.

but the beautiful thing about the Church of Jesus Christ is that we have something that breaks down walls... it breaks down barriers. Racism *may* exist out there... it must not exist in here...

people may be weighed on a scale of their economic worth out there... but may it NEVER BE THAT WAY IN HERE... Jesus paid the SAME PRICE FOR ALL OF US.

In here there is neither male nor female... Jew nor Gentile, slave nor free.

but IF the outside world can peak their heads through our stained glass windows, and watch us... yet NOT see something that looks different from the darkness that exists out there...

if they can come and visit, and feel the same tensions that they feel everywhere else that they go...

then we either need to fix that, immediately, or we ought to burn this place to the ground. The church is not a social club... it is a body. Made up of many members that are all different from each other yet serve one common goal.

so lets explore this fascinating passage together, and as we read it, lets reflect on our own lives, and the cultures that exist within our church, and in our homes...

and see what it means for us.

lets all open our bibles to 1 Corinthians 11:17-29 - I know it is a little long, but its so crucial!

But in the following instructions I do **not** commend you, because when you *come together* it is not for the better but for the worse. For, in the first place, when you *come together* as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you. And I believe it in part, for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized. When you *come together*, it is **not** the Lord's supper that you eat. For in eating, each one goes ahead with his *own* meal. One goes hungry, another gets drunk. What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I commend you in this? No, I will not.

For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "**This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.**" In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "**This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do**

this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.

Let’s Pray

It is believed, beyond a reasonable doubt, that the words of Jesus here are **THE OLDEST WRITTEN WORDS** that we have of our Lord. Paul wrote 1 Corinthians before any of the Gospels were written... meaning not only is this the first written account ever given for communion (or at least the longest preserved) but also any word spoken by Jesus.

Can you imagine, being the church in Corinth... and hearing so much about Jesus, about how He is our Savior and Lord... but not having the gospels written yet... and here Paul is obviously rebuking you... and in doing so he actually quotes Jesus. **THE OLDEST DOCUMENTATION OF RED LETTERS IS JESUS’ WORDS DURING HOLY COMMUNION**, sandwiched by a rebuke given to this church.

There must be something significant going on here. Something significant about the moment... something significant about the elements...

but also something significant about what the church in Corinth **HAD GOTTEN WRONG**.

we are going to look, in a little while, at that... at what was wrong in Corinth... focusing on the beginning passages we read, as well as the end, but first, lets look at the central part of this whole thing... some of the most famous words in the entire bible... it is verse 23-26:

the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, **“This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”** In the same way also he took the

cup, after supper, saying, **“This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”** For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

There are three words that are included in this passage, that are so absolutely crucial to understanding it.

The words are: thanks, remembrance, and covenant.

The first word, thanks, or thanksgiving, is the Greek word “*eucharisteō*” (you-har-estay-o) - this is where we get the word “Eucharist” from, which is what most people call Holy Communion... the “Eucharist.” and this word is just incredible. It literally means “Thanksgiving,” but its root word is the Greek word *charis* - which is the word “grace” - unmerited favor... a gift... but the thing that is so amazing about “*eucharisteō*” (you-har-estay-o) is you also find the word *chara* in it... which is the Greek word for Joy...

so to that degree, you can think of the Eucharist... “*eucharisteō*” (you-har-estay-o) as having joy, because of grace.

See, the difference between joy and happiness is that happiness is circumstantial... it is based on your circumstances... Joy is not like that. the writer of Hebrews (12:2) said that with the Joy that was set before him, Jesus endured the cross and despised our shame...

it is NOT saying, despite popular belief, that Jesus happily went to the cross... the “Joy” that was set before him was *us*... his bride... the people he knew that he was saving by doing something unthinkably hard and painful.

For Jesus... joy was not happiness... but it was hope.

and Joy manifests itself in our world through Thanksgiving... Jesus gave thanks, knowing that the future was painful but the result would be eternal. and IF YOU DON’T understand the mindset of Jesus going into this, you

will never fully understand why we come up here, and dip the little piece of bread into the cup each day.

but look at this... before we even get to the elements, Paul drops this in there: the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed...

The night He was betrayed

The night he was betrayed, he was betrayed by one of his best friends in all the world. He was betrayed by Judas, one of the 12 that he had chosen by hand and had poured his entire life into over the course of his time in earthly ministry...

The night he was betrayed was also PASSOVER. They were communing together, to celebrate passover. It was a celebration that Luke's gospel (22:15) records Jesus as saying these words:

"I have *earnestly desired* to eat this Passover with you before I suffer."

Celebrating passover with this disciples was something that Jesus looked forward to with anticipation. Excitement... it was a source of joy, knowing the pain that was before Him.

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Passover is something worth studying, because it is important to understand that they were not all gathered in that room that night just to have one final meal together... most of the disciples still didn't understand that Jesus was ACTUALLY going to be killed. But they understood passover.

Passover was an INCREDIBLY significant day for Jews... and they celebrated it every year, and this is what happened at the actual passover (Exodus 12).

The Israelites were slaves in Egypt for 430 years... Egypt was basically the world super power at that time... there wasn't anywhere like it... no one was more powerful or militant. And for 430 years the Israelites were

enslaved and oppressed, working 7 days a week, never getting a day off... moving bricks all day... having literally no rights at all.

And God raises up a man named Moses, and he positions Moses to lead the Israelites to freedom... and Moses confronts Pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt and tells him to "let God's people go." but Pharaoh refuses. Pharaoh really challenges Moses, basically saying "why would I believe that your God is more powerful than any other god?" "why would I let go my entire labor force?" or in other words "your God is going to have to do better than just sending you and asking for a favor"

So God begins sending plagues to come against Egypt... water turned to blood, locusts infested everything, darkness filled the land... and each time Pharaoh was stubborn, and even though he was seeing these tremendous signs from God, and he was obviously on the WRONG SIDE of them, he did NOT let the slaves go free.

So the tenth, and by far the worst plague, was the angel of death. a sort of prequel to judgment day... it is the stuff that horror movies are made of, its just absolutely horrific, WHAT HAD TO TAKE PLACE, to cause Pharaoh to finally release the people that had held been captive for over four centuries.

And what happened was, all of the first born's of every household in all of Egypt were going to be struck dead in one fateful night. Both man, and beast. It was judgment day for all of these families. And, it was judgment day for the gods... God said in Exodus 12:12 that on all of the gods of Egypt, He will execute judgment... meaning, he was going to prove, once and for all, who the real God is.

but God spoke to Moses and he told him what needed to happen in order for a household to be "passed over" by this angel of death. and this is what had to happen... The families each had to choose a perfect, spotless, male lamb, and they had to kill it. They had to take some of its blood and put it on the doorposts of their house, and inside their homes, they were to have a dinner...

they would eat the lamb, together. They were commanded to eat the whole thing... and IF their family wasn't big enough to eat the entire lamb, then

they were to share with their neighbors, and they were supposed to divide it up together, what each family could eat.

And all of the families who did those things... were spared.

Because when death came knocking on the doors of every home in the country, it was satisfied with the blood of the lamb.

And of course, those who did not have blood on their doorposts, all lost the first borns in their houses... it was a dark and horrific night with consequences that would last a lifetime... and it was finally enough for Pharaoh to say okay... "I don't want to fight against your God anymore... just go..." (me, paraphrasing)

but look at this verse... this is what God told Moses, just before that fateful night:

Exodus 12:14 -

This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it **as a feast**.

Which is a bit strange... usually you tell someone to remember, AFTER it has happened.

but God said "I am going to do this for you... but your job will forever be... to remember it."

Which leads us to the second and third key words we get in this account of the Lord's Supper... the words "remember," and "covenant."

AFTER the Israelites escaped Egypt, God made a covenant with them... he gave them the ten commandments, which most people consider to be "rules" - but the language used throughout the Bible actually gives us the image of the Ten Commandments being more like a Ketubah... the terms of God's marriage to the Israelites... because God brought them out, and redeemed them... the whole thing, which we today tend to think of as

bondage, actually represented a relationship in which the Israelite people were, for the first time in 430 years, treated as if they **MATTERED**.

and with the law of Moses, you do get all sorts of guidelines for right living within the covenant, as well as the process for atonement when someone does sin... and again, it is the sacrificing of a spotless animal.

So that was the Old Covenant... but this is what Jesus says when he drinks the cup... another way to translate it is:

“this cup is the new covenant and it cost my blood.” (Barclay)

notice this... just like how God gave the command to **REMEMBER**, **BEFORE** the passover actually happened... Jesus does the same thing... on the night he was betrayed... but **BEFORE** he was betrayed... he called them to remember what was about to happen.

But Jesus, in calling them to remember, also changes the story.

“You used to gather together and remember the passover... but because of what I am about to do, **the whole world will have now blood on their doorposts**... because of what I am going to endure... what I am going to take on...

the guilty will not be condemned. Because I will be condemned for them.

THAT... is the **NEW** Covenant.

in life, there is always a cost. **EVERYTHING** costs someone, something. You may go to a banquet, and eat an amazing meal at no cost to yourself... but somebody paid for the food. Somebody, somewhere gave up something, so that you could be a part of that banquet.

There is **ALWAYS** a cost. sometimes we pay. other times, we are blessed.

in Egypt, the cost was the life of the innocent... a perfect lamb that was slaughtered...

But that price... for every family who slay'd a lamb to save a son, was so small and insignificant when compared to the life of their first born... so every year after, they would gather, they would share a very specific meal together, and they would REMEMBER.

and in the same way that the Israelites gathered every year to remember passover, Jesus says that every time we come together, we remember him.

Passover has come again... and this time, it is for EVERYONE.

I remember one afternoon only a couple months after we got to Detroit, I was walking in the sanctuary with my daughter Milly, and the light was shining through all of our beautiful stain glass windows and was enough light that we didn't need to turn on any... and I was explaining to her some of the moments that are depicted in the glass as the light shined through them... and when we got to the cup, I said to Milly, "every time we take the bread and the cup, we are supposed to remember Jesus, and how he died for us..." and she said to me "really?" and I said "yes! yes Milly!"

and then this is what she said to me... she would have been 5 at the time...

she said "it is kind of hard to remember."

and I really thought about that... because of course it is hard for her to remember all of that... she was just beginning to learn what any of it means...

She is just a child.

and she has no concept of a debt... of a cost. No concept of owing someone something... she still probably didn't realize that in order for her to eat three meals every day, and half a dozen snacks in between those meals... that Dawn and I had to work, and pay for those things...

she doesn't know what its like to make a payment.

but adults aren't like that. That is why so many of us hold grudges. It is why so many of us hold our own pasts against ourselves and let it rob us of our future...

Because we are built to remember.

it is easy to remember the things you screwed up...

just like how it is easy to remember when your credit card is maxed out... because you get a letter reminding you about it every single month in the mail, with an option to pay a little and hang on to the debt a little longer, or to pay the balance yourself.

but would you remember, if someone came and paid off your credit card for you? or your mortgage? or your student loans? of course you would. You would never, ever forget that person. Because they paid the price that YOU OWED.

and even though there would be no way to pay that person back, you would want to at the very least, live your life in such a way that is worthy of someone who was set free from a mess that you got yourself into.

Would you not want to live more graciously? more generously?

That is why we take communion... to remember the New Covenant. To remember the covenant that the first passover points to... to remember the one who's blood is on the door posts of all of our lives, because he was willing to pay our debt.

The Bible says that God has removed our sins, as far as the east is from the west (Psalm 103:12) - it says that God blots out our sins from his memory... he doesn't even remember them (Isaiah 43:25) - all Jesus asks us to do, is to remember the cross, by the way that we live a life of communion.

How do you respond to that?

Well, this is how the early church responded to it:

In the days following the establishment of the church, there became something called “the *agape*” - or “the love feast” - and what it was, essentially was the “meal” part of Acts 2:42-47 - which is the part of Acts that talks about how everyone shared with everyone... people would sell something to pay someone else’s bill... all people had all things in common... Because that was the closest way that they could come up with, to live LIKE JESUS.

So at “the *agape*” - Everyone would bring what they could to the meal... some would bring a LOT, others would bring just a little... most likely there were others who would not be able to bring anything to the table, and yet, they were welcomed with open arms as part of the family...

in fact, people considered it a *privilege* to share this meal with one another.

it was a union of, as Acts puts it (Acts 2:44), people who have all things in common. Even if to the rest of the world, it would seem like they had NOTHING IN COMMON.

it was a common Union.
(communion)

and was a huge and beautiful part of the institution of the Church.

but it started to get twisted... and here is what was happening in Corinth:

The Corinthian Church met in the home of a man named Gaius... and when they would gather for church, what would happen was, before they would congregate and take “the Lord’s supper” together, all as one body, there first would be a “pre-meal.” Gaius and some of his more fancy-pants friends would gather, and they would bring out the finest meats, the best cheeses, the best wines... whatever it may be... things that SHOULD HAVE BEEN brought to the common meal, to share with everyone.

but instead, The wealthy would pull together with other wealthy people and have a “meal-before-the-meal” in which all of the best foods would be

consumed, leaving a minimal amount of less quality foods, for everyone else.

so this “pre-meal” was totally exclusive... it was a group of people who all looked alike, who all shared the same beliefs and politics and socio-economic status... in other words... these were people who naturally got along...

and IF someone ELSE would arrive a little early for “church” -

for the COMMON UNION...

and make their way inside and see this meal going on, they would NOT be welcome to join, instead, they would be asked to wait outside... then after this enormous feast among friends who all looked the same was over, then they would open the doors, and have a much more scaled back meal, consisting of a much lower quality assortment of foods, for everyone else.

and this was what they were calling “The Lords Supper” - and the problem wasn't that there wasn't much food... it WAS that there were walls.

There was an obvious divide among people because of status, and it was so thick that Paul says that when they would finally all get together, and they would take what they called “the Lord's Supper” - and they would have “church” - everyone who was a part of that would leave.. worse off than before they had even gotten there!

That is INCREDIBLY SIGNIFICANT! Paul said it clearly...

verse 17: “when you come together it is *not* for the better but **for the worse.**”

It would be better to not get together at all, than for the church of Jesus Christ to look the way that it looked in Corinth, when Paul is writing this. Now, this is just huge. I can't say it enough.

when we come to church, is it for the better? are we edified? are we lifting up Jesus Christ? are we remembering? are we growing more loving, or is it

the opposite... are we leaving more begrudgingly, because we saw someone that we just can't forgive? are their barriers up between us, where we migrate toward the people who we know we can relate with, agree with, and feel comfortable with?

it is easy to obligate yourself to attend something that you think will feed your need for righteousness... but if we come in here, yet ultimately our community looks NO DIFFERENT than the rest of the world, that is NOT righteousness,

that is an imaginary sense of "church" that we lean on to feed our pride. But it is NOT the bride of Christ.

its like giving a homeless man a quarter when you know that you could spare 5 dollars in that moment and not even of blinked.

It does us no good to only stretch as much as it takes to give the appearance of doing the right thing. We have to be intentional in our relationships to do the hard work of reconciliation because that is what the table is about. It is about the very thing that courage church builds its entire mission on... the reconciliation of all things around the only thing in the world that unites us.

and as we examine ourselves each week before we take communion, I would argue that based on what Paul says in Corinthians, whether or not you are taking the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner has nothing to do with the mistakes that you made this week, and has EVERYTHING to do with who it is you are sharing the meal WITH.

This phrase: "come together" - if you read it, in the brief section when Paul addresses the church BEFORE talking about Jesus at the last supper... he uses this little phrase THREE TIMES. Because truthfully, this phrase is the total and complete essence of what communion means.

You get it in verse 18, when Paul talks about divisions... in fact, he puts it this way: in the first place... I hear that there are divisions among you.

the first thing he feels necessary to say is that by the way your community is divided... you are KILLING COMMUNION.

hear this: Communion brings together the people who would never come together, if not for it... but is not meant to be something that we do as an excuse for NOT living intentionally with each other the rest of the week...

no... what it does is **it sets a new standard**. A new way of life, that says “the thing that unites us is SO MUCH STRONGER than anything that could possibly divide us... race... socio-economic status... political differences” all of those things fall to the ground at the table of the Lord, and when you take and eat of it, you are saying “these people are my family whether they look like me, act like me, vote like me, think like me, or live like me... or not.”

it is a “common union”

and how that springboards our lives, and our relationships, determines whether or not the Eucharist has actually taken shape in our lives.

Are we intentional to be in community with people who are different than we are, when we aren't in an environment where that diversity is cultivated for us?

Think about it... lets read verse 27-29, the last section:

Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.

This has been one of the hardest verses for people over the years. and I have had to really study this hard, because it is judgment language, which for me means “this is something that WE HAVE TO GET RIGHT.”

As you know, we take communion, every single Sunday here... just a simple, stripped down version of it... just a little bread, dipped into a cup.

But sometimes people, Christian people who have a relationship with Jesus Christ but have a misunderstanding of this passage... they stay in their seats, because earlier in the week, maybe they blew up at their spouse... or they lied to their parents... or they went out and made, just really bad choices... they ended up in situations they didn't want to be in... they did things they didn't want to do...

and they sit in the pews of this place of grace, and they think "I can't go before God, and eat the bread, and drink from the cup, because I have sinned."

"I am unworthy to take part in it, today."

But can I just cut through the tension that you have created in your own life... can I cut through the wall that you have put up that is keeping you from the grace of God, and say to you that it is on your WORST day, that you need the body, and you need the blood of Christ, even more so, then you need it on the weeks that you actually feel like you are worthy to take it.

Do you want to know who takes the cup in an unworthy manner? Someone who actually thinks that they ARE worthy too.

Someone who thinks that they have what it takes... that they have all they need. Someone who thinks that the way that they lived this week qualifies them to walk with God...

no... The cup, and the bread... it is all grace. That is why thanksgiving is so crucial to it... the moment you think that you have earned it, you lost it. Nobody is thankful for something that they believe they earned...

But it is even bigger than that.

What Paul is saying to the Corinthians, when you read it in the context of the letter, is that if you think that the cup is for you... BUT IT IS NOT for the person next to you... you are not worthy to take it.

If you think that because of the way you live, you deserve one thing, while someone else deserves something else... you are not worthy to take it.

if someone did something to you, and you just can't let it go... you can't forgive... you just feel, "it was too painful what they did... it was too much."
- you just can't see reconciliation... you can't see a future in which you and that person are in the same community...

that is when you stay in your seat.

The cup is what brings us together.

We should be meeting each other at this cup... embracing each other, crying on each others soldiers and forgiving one another...

Because the blood of Jesus was shed for even our worst sins... the ones that most people would struggle to ever forgive... it was laid upon Jesus, and crucified with Him.

The bread is what brings us together.

around the common understanding that we are partaking of these elements, or in some instances, enjoying this amazing meal, because of grace. Because of what Jesus did.

I want to close with this...

Communion is a common union... which means that it is only powerful when it is shared. When you take the community out of it, you take away its power...

think about this...

Think about passover.

Most of us make the central theme, the ONLY theme of the story - the part about the blood on the doorposts... because it is a PERFECT example of a perfect sacrifice made on behalf of someone else... it is a vivid image of the cross of Jesus Christ...

but the thing that the Israelites were commanded to do, moving forward, every year to honor, celebrate and remember the passover, was not the blood on the doorposts...

They don't have to go and put blood on their doorposts every year in remembrance of passover... THAT WAS A ONE TIME THING.

Instead, they are commanded to have a passover MEAL.

The lamb was central, but the peoples job was to gather.

Which is incredibly significant.

Years later... when John the Baptist saw Jesus approaching, he said these words:

“Behold, the lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world.”

everything about how the Jewish families were passed over on that fateful night points to Jesus Christ, yet Jesus doesn't ask us to sacrifice first borns, or lambs, or limbs... instead, he sacrificed himself.

Jesus says instead of that... every time you come together, in community... with people who look like you and people who don't look like you...

REMEMBER ME.

because **when people who have, share with people who *have not*... you are remembering, and living out the gospel of Jesus Christ.**

You don't honor what Jesus did by doing the same thing he did...

yes, there are some instances throughout history when that may happen... many of Jesus' followers died similar deaths, for the sake of the gospel... but we can't live our lives looking to be martyrs... we have to live our lives as ambassadors.

You don't honor what Jesus did by doing the same thing he did...

you honor what He did when you get together, in community, and celebrate that when death knocked on the door, the lamb answered on your behalf...

communion is the reason we come together. Remembering is the reason we come together. And when we remember, we celebrate.

We celebrate the cross, that brought us not only into a relationship with God, but into a relationship with each other. Communion is a celebration of diversity. of unity... of the God who died FOR YOU, rather than demanding the opposite... of the God who died for your neighbor, who looks nothing like you...

Of the God who brings people together, when everything about our world is trying to tear us apart and separate us.

and I wish that every Sunday morning we could have a huge meal together. How great would that be... But you honor God when you invite others into your home and break bread together. You honor God when you gather with people who don't all look and act just like you...

That is communion.

I remember earlier this year, when we had that enormous wind storm and the power was out at the church, Dawn and I invited the entire church to our house that Sunday morning and our team made everyone breakfast, and we ate together... and we shared, and we prayed for each other... we even had some first time guests. And Dawn and I, with a couple of our friends who were visiting from New York, stayed up late moving furniture around, and preparing tons of food... and early in the morning several others began arriving, some with food from their homes, others just to serve and prepare what food others brought over.

that is communion.

But it shouldn't take the power going out for a whole week in our entire community, for us to gather around the table together.

And this is what communion looks like at Courage Church...

communion is a common union of broken people, who are made whole by the body and blood of Jesus Christ. We are united by our differences, and there is a seat for everyone at the table.