

Portrait of a Spiritual Beggar
Philippians 3:6-8
October 20, 2013

Tom Pennington, Pastor-Teacher
Countryside Bible Church

Today as we prepare our hearts for the Lord's Table, I want to step away from where we are in our study of the Sermon on the Mount, and I want to remind you of the very first words our Lord spoke in this sermon. Matthew 5:3, when He opened his mouth to speak to the crowds that day, these were His first words: "Blessed are the poor in spirit..." that is, those who are spiritual beggars who understand their own spiritual poverty. "...for theirs..." that is, to them belongs "...the kingdom of heaven." They are actually in the spiritual kingdom over which Jesus rules. In the beatitudes, and of course this is the first of the beatitudes, Jesus is describing the character of those who are part of His spiritual kingdom. And He says that the very first and foundational quality that marks all of those who are truly His, who are truly in His kingdom, is that they have come to recognize that they are spiritual beggars. They have no spiritual assets before God.

But how do you know if that's true? You know, as we contemplate the Lord's Table, it's right we examine ourselves, starting with examining ourselves if we're really in the faith, as 2 Corinthians 13:5 says. How do we know if we have truly come to the realization of our own bankruptcy, and therefore, are in Jesus' kingdom? What does this look like?

I want you to turn with me this morning to Philippians 3, because in Philippians 3, Paul paints a portrait of what it looks like to be a spiritual beggar. The portrait is a self-portrait, because Paul describes exactly what it was like when he himself first came to the shocking realization that he was spiritually bankrupt, when he realized that his entire spiritual value system, based on his being a Pharisee and all that it entailed, was a farce-it was a pretense. Now in this passage Paul uses financial terms like profit and loss, assets and liabilities. And in verses 4-6, Paul lists a number of assets that he once considered to be valuable-things he once considered to be his spiritual assets when it came to gaining a right standing before God. Look at them with me.

Philippians 3:4, the middle of the verse. "If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more..." Here's his first spiritual asset. "...circumcised the eighth day..." Paul looked at his religious ritual, in his case circumcision, and he said, "religious ritual is an asset." His ethnic background. He says, "I'm 'of the nation of Israel.' Surely that's an asset. Part of the people of God. Descendant of Abraham." He looked at his spiritual heritage. He says, "I was 'of the tribe of Benjamin.'" - one of two of the twelve tribes that remained faithful to God in the Southern Kingdom. He says, "I looked at my spiritual heritage and that seemed like an asset." He looked at his traditional lifestyle and he says, "I was 'a Hebrew of the Hebrews.'" In other words, he didn't give in to the Hellenizing influence of the Greeks. He was pure in his traditional Hebrew lifestyle, and he saw that as an asset. "...As to the law, a Pharisee..." Paul looked at his religious association. He looked at the religious group he belonged to and it was the right group. It was the religious conservative group. It was those who looked at the law, and believed it, and who tried to protect and guard the law of God. Spiritual zeal. He didn't lack any of that. Verse 6. "...as to zeal, a persecutor of the church..." Paul said, "I looked at my spiritual zeal and that was a wonderful asset for me." And then finally, in verse 6, "...as to the righteousness which is

Available online at: <http://www.countrysidebible.org>
Copyright © 2013 Tom Pennington. All rights reserved.
Unedited transcript for personal use only.

in the Law..." that is, "as to the external conformity to the Mosaic Covenant, nobody who knew me could look at my external conformity to that law and point a finger." He saw all those things as assets when it came to pleasing God and when it came to gaining a right standing before God.

You understand what Paul is saying here? He actually thought that at the Judgment he could point to those assets and God would be impressed. God would say, "Paul, you really are spiritually rich. Of course you can come into my heaven. You have earned the right to be here." That's how Paul used to think. But something dramatic happened. Paul had a radical change in his thinking. The historical event is recorded in Acts 9- his conversion on the Damascus road. But it's here in Philippians 3 that we learn what was going on inside of his mind on that day. Paul unpacks for us here the Spirit's work in his heart on the Damascus road. In a moment of time, all of those things that he used to consider assets suddenly became spiritual liabilities. They all moved from his profit column to his loss column. And he was willing to give them all up, to lose them all. On that day in the early 30's AD, Christ, the resurrected Christ, confronted a proud, self-righteous Pharisee with Himself. And in a blaze of glory, He removed Saul's spiritual blindness and shattered his reliance on all of those spiritual assets. Jesus, both literally and spiritually, brought Paul to his knees that day, where, like the tax collector, all he could say was, "Christ, be merciful to me, a sinner." He became that day a beggar in spirit.

In two verses here in Philippians 3, Paul tells us what that radical change of thinking looked like. Now let me give you context before we look at the two verses together. Philippians 3:1-11 is one of my favorite sections in all the New Testament. The theme of this paragraph is justification by faith alone. Essentially, it is about the legal declaration that God makes, in which He declares the believing sinner to be perfectly righteous before the law, perfectly righteous in His sight, not because of something the believing sinner has done, but because of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, credited to that sinner, by faith alone. That's what this paragraph is about. Paul wanted the Philippian believers - he wants us to know that this doctrine of justification must always remain at the center of our Christian lives, even as it had his own.

But today, I just want us to consider verses 7 and 8. Because it is here that we see that justification always follows a radical change in thinking that the Holy Spirit produces, a radical change in thinking that brings a man to see his complete spiritual bankruptcy. It is a portrait of what spiritual bankruptcy looks like. Let me challenge you this morning, as we prepare our hearts for the Lord's Table, to hold the mirror of God's Word up to your own soul, regardless of what your past profession might have been. Look again; examine yourself again in the light of Scripture and ask yourself if the Spirit of God has ever produced this radical change of thinking in your own soul. Let's look at it together - verses 7 and 8.

But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ....

Let's stop there for now.

Now notice in those two verses, the English word 'count' occurs three times. The Greek word that's translated as 'count' has the idea of carefully weighing the facts, carefully weighing the evidence, and as a result of weighing those facts, arriving at a settled verdict, a settled

conviction. It describes a change in Paul's thinking. Understand, Paul did not, he could not, change the fact of his spiritual assets. He couldn't change the fact that he'd been circumcised the eighth day. He couldn't change the fact that he was a Jew. He couldn't change the fact that he was from the tribe of Benjamin. And so forth. What radically changed, instead, was Paul's perspective about those things, his value system. He wants us to understand that if we ever hope to be accepted by God, to gain a right standing before God, to be allowed into Heaven, to be justified, we must first have the same kind of radical change in our thinking, produced by the Spirit of God.

You see, if you have been justified, if you're a true Christian who has been declared by God to be right with Him, there was a point in time when your thinking radically changed like Paul's in three distinct ways. First of all, your thinking radically changed about yourself. Our thinking must radically change about ourselves. This is something the Spirit of God produces. Notice verse 7. "But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ." Now Paul's renunciation of himself here, comes in the language of the market place or the language of Wall Street. He says, "...whatever things were gain...." The word 'gain' is actually plural in the Greek text. "...whatever things were gain[s] to me...." 'Gains' is a financial term - means profit or advantage. Paul is referring back to verses 4 through 6 and all those spiritual assets that he thought he had. One by one he had counted and tallied up those spiritual assets and he had concluded that those things were real spiritual advantages. They profited him. His whole life he had put his confidence in those things. He really expected to present those things to God at the Day of Judgment and he expected God to let him into Heaven, because those things were true. And then something dramatic happened. Notice he says, "...those things I have counted as loss." "Whatever things were gain to me - there was a time when they were gains to me - those things I have now counted as loss for the sake of Christ. All of my spiritual assets in one moment of time became a spiritual liability, a big loss." That's a radical change in value.

That happens sometimes here on this planet. I think back to the similar radical revaluation of assets that occurred during the Great Depression of the 1930's. You're all aware, of course, of Black Tuesday and the great stock market crash of 1929. Over the three years that followed that day's crash, stock prices fell on average more than 80%. Nine thousand banks failed. And 25% of the US population, one in four, were unemployed. Millions of people during those days had a radical shift in their thinking about value and possessions. Several years ago I read about a man named Ben Isaacs. He lived in Chicago during the Great Depression. This is what he wrote. He said, "I was in business for myself selling clothes on credit. But banks closed down over night. We lost everything. I couldn't pay the rent. And so I sold the family car for \$15 in order to buy some food for the family." Now \$15 was worth a lot more in those days than it is today, but that wasn't even close to the value of the car. It was seriously deflated in value, as he sells it just to get some food. That's a revaluation of assets.

But the difference between the Great Depression and Paul's radical revaluation was that in the Great Depression most assets still had some residual value, even if it was only \$15 for a car. Paul, on the other hand - he discovered that all of his spiritual assets, without exception, were absolutely worthless. He started thinking that way when he met Christ on the Damascus Road. He writes this letter thirty years later and he's still thinking the same way. Everything that used

to be of value to Paul no longer had any value at all. If you've ever had your physical life threatened, you've experienced this to some extent. When Sheila and I lived in LA, one of those massive wild fires that you see on the television came within a quarter mile of our home. I was thirty miles away down at Grace Community Church, and Sheila was the last one that the fire units let back into our neighborhood. And they told her as she entered the neighborhood, "Listen, ma'am, we may very well have to evacuate your neighborhood. We're not sure if we're going to be able to keep the fire from entering here. And if we do, you'll have ten minutes' warning." Now ask yourself for a minute, if someone knocked on your door and said, "You have ten minutes to gather whatever is valuable to you and leave your home," what would you do? That is a uniquely clarifying moment. Because all of those things that seemed so important just an hour before are suddenly not important at all. They can be replaced. They're just things. But your mind goes to those things that can't be replaced, that may have no real financial value, but have amazing value to you.

That's exactly what happened in conversion. That's exactly the same kind of radical change in values that always accompanies true conversion. That's why Jesus said, "...if any man would come after Me let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever wants to save his life must lose it." Everything's turned on its head. There's a radical reevaluation that takes place. Have you ever come to that place? Have you ever come to a point in your life where the Spirit of God has brought you to the point where you acknowledge that you are spiritually bankrupt before God - you are an absolute spiritual beggar - and in that moment you realize that nothing that you once thought was spiritually valuable, was? Your religious ritual - maybe you have been baptized or christened or confirmed or whatever it was; your ethnic background; your spiritual heritage - maybe your parents and grandparents were believers; your lifestyle; your religious group that you belong to; your spiritual zeal; your own righteousness; your own half-obedience to God - all of those things you came to realize were absolutely worthless. You were nothing; you had done nothing that would cause God to accept you at the Judgment. Have you ever come to that place? That's what it means to be poor in spirit.

Now what caused such a radical change in thinking in Paul about himself? Look at verse 7. "...those things I have counted as loss for the sake of..." - or it could be 'on account of' or 'because of' - "...Christ." Now that introduces us to the second radical change in Paul's thinking. Not only must there be a sweeping change in regard to ourselves, but where there's true conversion there will also be a sweeping change, a radical change, in our thinking about Christ. Look at verse 8. "More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord..." Notice he begins verse 8 by saying he's going to tell us something more; but when you compare verses 7 and 8, at first glance he seems to be saying the same thing he said in verse 7. But look a little closer, because in reality he makes two crucial changes. The first change he makes is in verb tense. In verse 8 he uses the present tense. "I [am counting] all things to be loss..." Or we could say, "I [keep on counting] all things to be loss..." Also in verse 7 he refers, notice, to "...whatever things were gain to me..." - those spiritual assets that he listed in verses 4 through 6. In verse 8 he adds to that and makes it even larger. He says, "I count all things to be loss..." Nothing is excluded. There was absolutely nothing in Paul's life or in life on this planet that Paul would not have given up for Christ.

Think for a moment about the things the people around you live for. It's really not that long a list, when you stop and think about it. What is it that people really want in life? Well, we could start a list. We could say wealth, fame, status, respect, pleasure, creature comforts, family, friends. You might add another one or two to that list, but it's not a terribly long list, really, that all humanity are living for. For Paul on the Damascus Road, not only his spiritual assets became worthless, but everything else - everything else that people live for - was nothing to him compared to the value of Christ. And 30 years later, they continued to have no value to him compared to Christ. Paul constantly weighed everything he was, everything he had achieved, everything that he owned, everything that he could live for; and he came to the deliberate conclusion that all of it was completely worthless next to Christ. It utterly lacked value. Why? Notice. Because of the 'surpassing value.' 'Surpassing value' speaks of something with ultimate incomparable worth, the ultimate asset, something that's in a different class than everything else. What surpasses everything else on this planet in its value? Knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.

Paul had a radical change in his thinking about Christ. First of all about the person of Christ. Notice what he calls Him in verse 8. He calls Him "Christ Jesus." Christos. Messiah. Jesus. Now, as you know, Paul was born at Tarsus and lived there for a number of years, but he was eventually educated in Jerusalem, under Gamaliel. And at some point he learned of Jesus of Nazareth. We don't know exactly when. But Paul utterly rejected Jesus' claims when he heard about Him. In fact, listen to Paul's own words. This is from his testimony in Acts 26. He says in verse 9, "...I thought to myself that I had to do many things hostile to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." He goes on in verse 11 of Acts 26, "...as I punished [His followers] often in all the synagogues, I tried to force them to blaspheme..." - that is, to blaspheme Christ, to slander Christ. In other words, Paul's goal was, by intimidation, by threat, by imprisonment, and even by what he calls punishment - that was the torture of beating - to force Christ-followers to deny His claims. The young Saul saw his battle not merely against the followers of Jesus, but against Jesus Himself. He saw himself as on a holy agenda, a holy war against the false claims of a blasphemer and a cult leader and a fraud. But on the Damascus Road, his thinking about Jesus was radically changed. He told the Philippians, notice verse 8, that he had come to believe that Jesus was the Christos, the Christ, the Ha-Mashiach, the Anointed One, the One God said He would send, in the Old Testament, to His people to accomplish their redemption. Notice Paul also says, "He is my Lord." Usually Paul says, "our Lord." In fact this is the only place in the New Testament where he uses the singular pronoun, "my Lord." It's his own testimony. He says, "Listen. I came to believe that Jesus is God Himself, before whom 'every knee will bow,'" Philippians 2, "and He's my rightful Master, and He's my Lord, and He's my Sovereign." So on that road Paul's thinking about the person of Christ radically changed.

But his thinking also changed about the value of knowing Christ. Notice verse 8 again. "More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing [asset, the surpassing] value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord." Now the word 'know' here is informed by its use in the Old Testament, in the Septuagint, and the Hebrew word that's used in the Hebrew Old Testament. It speaks not merely of knowing about Christ, but of knowing of Him personally and relationally. Of course there was a time when Paul had no desire for that, but now it's the most important thing in the world to him - to know Jesus Christ. There's another person that comes to my mind when I think of that, and that's Moses. Yes, Moses made life decisions based on the Messiah. I love the way the writer of Hebrews puts it in Hebrews 11. You understand, I mean, we think

about Moses and we don't really get this. Moses was the adopted son of the most powerful woman in Egyptian history, a woman named Hatshepsut. She actually sat on the throne of Egypt for a time. And it was very possible for Moses, as her adopted son, to move into that position as the Pharaoh of the most powerful nation on earth in that time. And yet what does the writer of Hebrews say? He considered the reproach of the Messiah to be more valuable than all the treasures of Egypt. By the way, the word 'considered' - same Greek word as 'count' here. He looked at the evidence; he weighed the evidence; and he came to a settled conclusion, that knowing the Messiah, living his life for the Messiah, was greater value than everything he could have had as the pharaoh of Egypt. He walked out on that.

How does that happen? How did that happen with Moses? How did that happen with Paul? If you're in Christ, how did it happen with you? How did you come to value Christ so highly? It's not because you're smarter or brighter than people around you. It's because of grace.

Turn with me to 2 Corinthians 4. Here's why you came to that conclusion. 2 Corinthians 4:3. This is where we used to be: "...even if our gospel is veiled..." - if it's hidden - "...it is veiled to those who are perishing..." - those who are heading toward eternal separation from God in a place our Lord called Hell, a place of unimaginable suffering and anguish. It's veiled to those who are lost, "...those who are perishing." Why? Verse 4. "...in whose case the god of this world (Satan), has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." They just don't see it because they're blind. "For we do not preach ourselves but [Messiah] Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your [slaves] for Jesus' sake." So you say, "Well, how did I come to value Christ so highly?" Here it is. Verse 6. "For God, who said, 'Light shall shine out of darkness'..." Stop there. What is that a reference to? It is a reference to the creation. In the process of creation, God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. So he says, "For God, who said, 'Light shall shine out of darkness,' is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ." The reason you prize Jesus Christ, if you're in Christ, the reason you came to recognize His value and the value - the surpassing value - of knowing Him, wasn't because you were bright. It was because of a sovereign act of the Spirit of God, in which, in grace, He said in your soul, "Let there be light," and you saw. You saw who you were in relationship to God - your desperate need - and you saw the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. You heard the gospel. Perhaps you'd heard it many times before. But in that moment, through the gospel that you heard or read or remembered, the Spirit of God was in that message bringing life to your dead soul and light to your blindness.

Let me ask you, has that ever happened to you? Has your thinking ever changed about the person of Christ? Perhaps once you thought He was a myth or a legend. Or maybe you thought, "No, He actually existed, but He was a fraud." Or maybe you thought, "No, He wasn't a fraud. I thought He was a good Man. I thought He was a gifted teacher. I thought He was one of those who instruct us about God and the ways of God, like Buddha or somebody else." Or maybe you understood that He was, in fact, God in human flesh, but you simply were not willing to bend your knee to him as Lord, because you loved your sin - that's what you wanted. But have you ever come to the place, has the Spirit ever brought you to a place where you've seen the value of Jesus Christ, where the lights come on and you've seen that compared to anything else in this world you could ever want, nothing comes close? If you're a Christian, that's happened - the

Spirit's done that. Have you ever come to see personally and relationally that knowing Jesus Christ is life's ultimate asset? Do you count everything else that you hold as dear in this world as lost in view of the surpassing value of knowing Him? Listen. Before you can receive the gift of justification, the Spirit of God will work this in your heart as part of what we call regeneration. He will change your thinking about yourself. You'll see yourself as a spiritual beggar and you'll change your thinking about Christ. You will see the infinite value of knowing Him.

And thirdly, if you have been justified, the Spirit produced a radical change in your thinking about salvation. Notice the second half of verse 8. "...for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ." Now that's an amazing statement. "...I have suffered the loss of all things..." for Christ. You see, Paul not only counted everything as lost, he actually lost everything. When Paul acknowledged Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah on the Damascus Road, as his Lord, he lost everything. He lost his status, his lifestyle, his home, his friends, his family, his associations, his property, his possessions, his future inheritance, his reputation; he lost everything. By the way, that's exactly what it costs everyone to become a Christian. Salvation is free, but it'll cost you everything.

Luke 14:26. Jesus says, "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple." Verse 33 of that same chapter. "So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions." You see, Christ may not ask you to actually give up everything, like He did Paul, but if you're going to come to Him to be His disciple, He asks you - He demands - that you be willing to give up everything. Paul says, "I lost everything that used to matter to me, but I have no regrets. In fact all that I used to treasure, everything I lost, I now consider..." - notice verse 8 - "...to be rubbish." The Greek word for 'rubbish' is 'skubalon.' It's a very strong word. The least offensive use of this word, in the secular Greek literature, refers to table scraps that were thrown to the dogs. But it is often translated as 'dung' or 'manure' or even 'human excrement.' It's not a vulgarity, but in polite Greek there was no more pejorative term Paul could have chosen than this one. He says, "All that I used to treasure is now not only worthless, to me it is now filthy and foul and disgusting and repulsive." Why? Because there's only one thing that's important to him anymore. Notice the end of verse 8. "...that I might gain Christ."

Paul turns the entire financial metaphor of this passage on its head. And he says, "What used to be my gains I now have declared to be a total loss and to be liabilities, so that I can have the only real gain, the only real profit in the universe, which is Christ Himself." Notice he explains what it means to gain Christ in verse 9. "...and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from Law [keeping]..." In other words, it's not a righteousness because of my obedience to God's law, but it's a righteousness which is through faith in Christ - the righteousness which comes from God as a gift on the basis of faith. In other words, to gain Christ, then, is to gain a right standing before God solely through the righteousness of Jesus Christ, received by faith alone. To gain Christ is, on the Judgment Day, to be found in Christ, to have His righteousness as your own. Think of it this way. God welcomes you into heaven not because you deserve to be there, but because Christ deserves to be there and you are connected to Him. You are in Him. When you come to that point, everything else looks like manure. It looks like excrement.

Paul had a radical change in his thinking about the way of salvation. He used to think, back in verse 6, that he could be saved from God's wrath against sin by his own righteousness. Now he understands that his only hope before a just and holy God is Jesus' righteousness. His confidence is now in Jesus' death as his substitute, and in Jesus' perfect righteousness, credited to him by faith alone. So you see then that in verses 7 and 8, Paul's conversion on the Damascus Road is laid out - not the external events, those are in Acts 9, but what was going on inside the apostle. In his soul, there was a radical, comprehensive, sweeping change in his thinking. But what I want you to understand is that change in thinking was not unique to Paul. It is the mind set of everyone, Paul says here, who has experienced justification. You see, to be declared right before God, you don't have to live out Paul's experiences. You don't have to be blinded by a light and knocked down. You don't have to see God - see Christ - in Person. You won't, until heaven. But, you can never gain a right standing before God unless the Spirit of God produces in your soul what He produced in Paul's - a fundamental change in your thinking about yourself, when you come to see yourself as a spiritual beggar, that you have done nothing, you are nothing, that has any spiritual value before God; you have nothing that can be used as currency in heaven. You have a change of thinking about Christ - you come to see who He is and the incomparable value of knowing Him - and about the way of salvation - you've realized it's never going to be by my own righteousness, it's never going to be by anything that I do. "Not by works, which I have done, but according to His mercy He saved me," Paul says. It's found in Christ's death and in His righteousness alone.

The Lord's Table is a time of self-examination. First of all, we ask ourselves, "Am I really in the faith?" I'm not asking if you've been baptized or christened or confirmed or how many times you walked an aisle or what you've said about yourself - "Yes, I'm a Christian." I'm not asking you any of that. I'm asking you, has the spirit of God ever produced these radical changes in your thinking? Have you seen yourself as a spiritual beggar? Have you seen Christ as the most valuable thing in all the world - knowing Him? And have you seen that your only hope of being saved before God is outside of yourself in Jesus Christ? It's also a time for those of us who are in Christ to ask ourselves, "Has anything in our lives, has any sin, or anything else, gradually become more important, more valuable to us than Christ?" Take a moment. Pray and prepare your heart for the Lord's Table as the men come.

Our Father, thank You for the mirror of Your Word that we can hold up to our souls. Father, help us to genuinely examine ourselves to see if we're in the faith. Help us to be honest with ourselves about whether the Spirit has produced those changes in thinking in us or not. And Father, I pray if there's someone here who has to admit that, whatever they may profess, they've never really come to that point, I pray that today would be the day when, like Paul, like every Christian, they come to the point where they acknowledge their spiritual bankruptcy and they call out to You for mercy. Lord, let there be light in their souls today. But Father, for the rest of us, as we prepare for the Lord's Table, I pray that You would help us to genuinely confess our sins to You. Forgive us, oh God, for ever allowing anything, in any small way even, to supplant the value of knowing Christ. Lord, each of us in our own hearts, because Your Spirit has shown us, we know our sins. We're convicted by Your Word as the Spirit shines the light on our own souls. Lord, we confess those sins to You now individually and personally. And we ask for Your forgiveness. Lord, cleanse us of every stain. Give us renewed resolve to turn from those sins.

Lord, don't let us be comfortable with our sin. And Father, I pray that You allow us to take of this ordnance, this reminder of our Lord and His death, in a way that is in keeping, that honors His death for sin. We pray in Jesus' name, amen.