



# The Tri-Cities Edifier

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## DON'T FORGET *Remembering Jesus*

by Rick Lanning

Memory. It's a fragile thing. We now have short-term memory loss, long-term memory loss, dementia, Alzheimer's, and just your ordinary "I forgot" that everyone experiences. Forgetting is a part of all of our lives. In fact, some of us are working toward the title: "World's Best Forgetter."

Many historical figures don't want to be forgotten, so they build monuments or have lands, cities, buildings and other edifices named for themselves. Trump Tower, the Pyramids of the Pharaohs, Jacksonville or Harvard College were all built and named to keep the memory of someone alive. Washington D.C. has the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial, the Jefferson Memorial. States and cities all over the country have statues of famous citizens in town squares to keep the memory of them alive and to remind the next generations of their history.

Why does the tombstone industry do so well? This monument industry specializes in granite grave markers in hopes that we will not be soon forgotten. We hope our memory will last at least as long as the marker. We cry out as we age and then die: "Don't forget me!" Gravesites like that of Elvis Presley at Graceland in Memphis, Tennessee is located just a few minutes from where I grew up. I was stunned to read that Graceland has over half-a-million visitors each year and is one of the five most visited home tours in America. And, incredibly, it is the second most visited home in the nation, with only The White House being greater. Lisa Marie Presley manages Graceland, trying to ensure that Elvis will

not soon to be forgotten. But he will. The march of time forgets all men. Who visits the graves of kings and queens from a thousand years ago in 1021 A.D. (did you know King Harold Godwinson II ruled England that year... I didn't think so)?

But there is one memory that is kept alive by multitudes of people around the world every week. It's not from the view of a tombstone that Jesus is remembered, for it is empty, but from the Words of the living Lord of lords and King of kings that we remember Him. Every funeral and memorial service ever conducted over the graves of men were never heard by the deceased. Imagine visiting Graceland and talking to the grave of Elvis, only to hear him personally sing "You Ain't Nothing But A Hounddog." You would freak out. But Jesus' memorial service is actually seen and heard by the One to whom we come to pay our respects.

Jesus anticipated His death. His life was in fact built around His date with destiny – Calvary! He was born to die. God's great scheme of redemption was centered around His Son's death. But the Lord did not choose granite tombstones, towering buildings, memorials, lands or cities with His name attached, or any other kind of remembrance. Instead, Christ chose a simple meal to be eaten by His disciples once a week, with the quote "*This do in remembrance of Me*" echoing in our ear. The Lord's Supper is His call for the ages to "Don't Forget Me!"

When you eat this memorial feast please keep in mind the Context, the Command, and the Confidence found in Matthew 26:26-30. First, let's study:

**The Context** (Matt. 26:1-19). The Passover meal was the focus as Jesus gathered His apostles in the upper room on that fateful night before His death. These 13 men were all Jews who lived under the Law of Moses. Approximately 1500 years before this the Israelites were slaves in Egypt. On the eve of the last plague to strike Pharaoh – the death of the firstborn – God commanded His people to kill a male lamb and spread the blood over the door so that the angel would

then “pass over” the home, sparing the life of the oldest child. Christ now stands ready to fulfill the real meaning of this sacred feast by Himself becoming the Passover Lamb who would now “*take away the sin of the world*” (Jn 1:29). As Paul said, “*For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed*” (I Cor 5:7). Don’t forget!

**The Command** (Matt. 26:26-28). When Jesus gave the unleavened bread and fruit of the vine to His apostles, He commanded: “***Do this in remembrance of Me***” (Lk 22:19; I Cor 11:25). Do what? Take the bread. Take the cup. Remember His body. Remember His blood. In other words, think about this Lamb of God who was without spot or blemish. He was unleavened, like the bread. He was unfermented, like the cup.

Unleavened bread was for a purpose. Yeast and leaven was often used to describe sin. “*A little leaven leavens the whole lump*” (I Cor 5:6; Gal 5:9). “*Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees*” (Matt 16:6). “*Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth*” (I Cor 5:7-8).

The “fruit of the vine” is never once called wine in the context of the Lord’s Supper. Neither *OINOS* or *GLEUKOS* (words translated “wine”) is ever used. These words could imply fermented or strong wine. Think about it, why would Jesus use that for which He condemned man to drink? “*Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup... at last it bites like a serpent and stings like a viper*” (Prov 23:31). If you are a recovering alcoholic, rest assured, we do not put a stumbling block in your way when called to remember our sinless Savior’s shed blood. The meaning of UN-leavened bread and FRUIT of the vine is real to us. So, don’t forget!

**The Confidence** (Matt 26:29). “*But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father’s kingdom.*” Now that’s confidence! He knew He would conquer death and rise again. He fully planned on being present with them on Pentecost in less than two months when the kingdom began. When they assembled to “*break bread*” Jesus was there! Victory was His.

Greater than any marching army in history the Captain of our Salvation is to be gratefully remembered each first day of the week when we gather around His table. And we do it confidently, “*til He comes*” (I Cor 11:26).

Please, don’t forget!