

## **“Plates, Cups, Saucers and Memories”**

**Mark 14: 12-26**

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First Baptist Church

Frankfort, Kentucky

October 2, 2016

### **Communion Devotion**

They may be one hundred years old. For their age, they are in remarkably good condition. There are very few chips and cracks, and almost every piece is still there.

Several times a year, Jackie takes my grandmother’s dishes out of the china cabinet and sets the table with them. She does this especially for holidays and special occasions.

Each time I see those dishes, I smile. They take me back to another time and place filled with delicious memories.

I must tell you, however, every time I gaze at the table with these dishes in their proper places I see more than plates and cups and saucers and serving pieces. I see my grandmother, Daisy Hancock Hays.

She is wearing an apron and busily working in the kitchen preparing a big meal. She stands over the table after everyone has been seated to make sure everything is the way she wants it, which it always was.

She listens to the blessing and whispers a prayer of gratitude for her family. Her family, in turn, thanks God for her and my grandfather and their willingness to bring us all together in a place filled with love and laughter.

Yes, each time I see my grandmother’s dishes, I recall what a great cook and warm hostess she was. I remember much more about her, though.

I remember how industrious, organized, resourceful, strong-willed, kind-hearted, loyal, loving, social and spiritual she was. She was as fine a seamstress and housekeeper as she was a cook.

She was the best checker player I have ever known. She was equally good when playing cards and board games. She was at her best when sitting on her front porch swing listening to our disappointments and dreams.

I'm sure you have similar memories and can identify what triggers them. At least I hope so.

**Each time the disciples gathered to re-enact the Last Supper they had with Jesus, I wonder if they had a similar experience.** Do you think they saw beyond the bread and wine and the plate and the cup as they looked at the table? I believe they did.

Perhaps they began reminiscing as I have just done. One by one they talked about Jesus and recalled something he said or did.

Maybe they mentioned how organized Jesus was. Just as he prepared in advance for Palm Sunday, so he took care of all the details for the final Passover meal they would share.

They may have also reminisced about the kind of man Jesus was as they talked about how strong, courageous, compassionate, merciful, generous, wise, understanding, forgiving, faithful, loving and patient he was.

Surely, they offered prayers of gratitude to God for making their time with Jesus possible and asked God to help them continue the good work he began.

**This morning, I hope you see beyond these trays and cups, this bread and juice.** I pray you also see Jesus and recall his life, death and resurrection. I hope you see what the disciples saw each time they took communion, and you 'stand amazed in the presence of Jesus the Nazarene'.

**I hope you see some other things, too.**

I pray you see family members and friends who need you to be like Jesus.

I pray you see where you fell short last week and what changes you need to make in your values, priorities, lifestyle, relationships and attitude.

I pray you see God's mercy and God's offer to forgive you and to help you make these changes.

I pray you see this golden opportunity to leave this sanctuary a better person than when you arrived.

I pray you see beyond these trays and cups and recognize how loved you are by the one we honor and remember today.

**Join me now as we gather around this table of memory and hope.**