



*Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood."  
(Luke 22:19-20)*

I've lived in Cleveland all but twelve years of my life, and I had not been to Lakeview Cemetery until this past Labor Day weekend. The Alan Freed monument was pretty cool because it was shaped like a jukebox, but Ray Chapman's headstone was a bit of a disappointment seeing as it was covered with beat up baseballs and weathered fielding gloves. Maybe that's the charm of it for some, but it didn't do anything special for me. We steered clear of the "angel with the dark eyes" though we were asked a couple of times if we knew where it was. Too creepy for me.

What I did take notice of, immediately, were the number of mammoth sized monuments, their arms reaching toward the sky as if hoping for some heavenly reward for the deceased lying under the heavy stone. I wondered if there was a correlation between the size of the monument and the prestige of the person buried beneath it. The larger the monument, the more the person had accomplished? Or the more famous the person was? Or the bigger the person's ego? Or the size of the person's bank account? I never thought the presidency of James A. Garfield was anything spectacular, though one could think so given that his corpse has its own building. Maybe all of these folks with the enormous monuments just wanted to be remembered after they were gone, and this was their way of trying.

This got me thinking about how I might want to be remembered. Hopefully, I'll take a more humble approach. And then I thought about Jesus, who gathered his disciples together for a Passover meal and instructed them to eat some bread and enjoy a glass of wine to remember him. It would be a vivid reminder of his body and blood shed at the cross of Calvary. What a simple, yet powerful way to call to mind the love of the Savior. Something we can touch and taste. Something we swallow and feel its warmth sliding down our throats. Something on the bitter side to remind us of his crucifixion. Items we might be prone to have in our kitchens so we can recollect him frequently, even during the course of a normal day. Wheat harvested from the field, grapes plucked from the vine. That's just like Jesus, to use things of the earth, everyday things that are part of our lives. So we remember him every day, and so we think about what he did for us and how much he loves us. Smart, very smart. Because after all, his only monument was a cross.

Pastor Chuck

Let us pray. Lord Jesus, we thank you for leaving for us a memorial we can taste and touch, and in the mystery of your divine work it becomes for us your body and blood, given and shed for us. May our memory of you always start at the cross, where you poured out your life for us, and end at the empty tomb where our eternal life begins.

Amen