

Dinner With Jesus Part 6

The Lord's Table

Luke 22:14-23

Memory Verses: 1 Corinthians 11:26

MANUSCRIPT

Introduction (Me, We, & the Struggle)

Think about some of the most meaningful meals you've ever had. Maybe it was your wedding reception or a first date. Maybe it was a Thanksgiving or Christmas meal with all of the family gathered around the table. Maybe it was the last meal you shared with a loved one. The point is this... the meals you remember aren't about the food... its about the relationships. Meals are moments and memories. Meals are about community and fellowship and grace.

Throughout this series we've sat at the table with Jesus. We've sat with Jesus as he welcomes the most vile of sinners; Matthew the tax collector and the Prostitute who washed Jesus' feet. We've sat with Jesus at the great banquet where all the outcasts were invited to dine with the King of Kings. We've sat with Jesus with the travelers to Emmaus as he broke the bread and blew their minds. These were sinful, evil, marginalized outcasts and yet Jesus had a divine appointment to eat with each of them. Why? Because... **grace sits with sinners before it stands to preach**. Grace welcomes you to sit at the table and eat before it demands you turn from your sin. Remember, the cross comes before the resurrection. Dinner with Jesus is about grace.

And all of this leads us to perhaps the most important dinner of them all. This is the one meal that ties all of the others together. The one that explains why He came, what He's about to do, and what it means for us... of course I'm talking about The Last Supper. Turn with me if you would to **Luke 22:14-23**. The Last Supper, the Lord's Table, Communion, the Eucharist. This is a big deal. This is the central meal of all of human history. Why? Because it memorializes the sacrifice of Christ.

Let me ask you a question. Why do we build memorials? Why is there a memorial for the Pearl Harbor attack over the sunken USS Arizona? Why is there two giant square pits in New York where the World Trade Center towers once stood? Why is there a black wall 1/10th of a mile long in Washington DC with 60,000 names of people who died in Vietnam? Why do we have a cross on our wall? Because our memories are leaky and we tend to forget what isn't constantly on our minds. So we need stark reminders lest we forget. These symbols represent moments that should never be forgot!

And that's what Jesus is doing here. He is giving his disciples and

his followers, throughout the rest of time, something to remember him by. This isn't just a table, its a teaching. Bread and cup. Body and blood. Something you can hold in your hands, taste on your tongue, pass to your children. Something that says, don't you ever forget this!

And here's why this matters; because some of us walked in here today running on empty. We're tired and distracted. Some of us are beat up by sin and life, weighed down with shame and doubt. Does Jesus really love us or care about us? To that Jesus says, come to the table, come and see.

This isn't about religious ritual or something we do in church services. This is about anchoring your soul to the cross of Christ, the great sacrifice for our sins. This is about being reminded of the grace and mercy and forgiveness you never deserved but have been given in Christ. Whatever is going on in your life, whatever is weighing you down, it is inconsequential to the weight of sin that Christ has forgiven you of... and on top of that all of you have been given eternal reward with Christ in heaven. You are not a victim... the table of Christ says you are a King! So in a world full of noise and distraction.. come back to the table and remember.

At this table we remember His sacrifice, we renew our faith, and we rejoice in our hope.

Teaching (Expand on the Problem, God)

The first thing we need to see is that... **The Table Reminds Us of His Sacrifice**. Look at **1 Corinthians 11:26**. Remember that this meal was actually the passover meal. This meal was already a memorial of another event in history; the time when the death angel passed over the children of Israel who had the blood of the lamb painted on their doors. Every single year the Jews would remember that God had saved them because of the blood of the lamb. But this year something different happened at dinner. This time Jesus lifted up the bread and said this is my body given for you. The disciples, having taken this meal every year of their lives know the words which are to be said and the lines that are to be delivered.... this is not it. This is clearly not in the script! Then Jesus takes the cup and says this is the cup of the new covenant in my blood, poured out for you! This is clearly not just about Egypt anymore...

I hope you recognize the significance here. Jesus is fulfilling in their presence what the passover in Egypt was all about. Faith in the blood of the lamb gives salvation. And now a new lamb's blood will be spilt, one which will provide, not a temporary salvation, but an eternal one. For all who put their faith in the blood of the lamb; Jesus Christ. This is the center of Christianity. You can't be saved by your good works or effort. You can only be saved by the broken body and shed blood of Jesus Christ. And the bread and cup represent this. Memorialize this. They are small symbols of the most important event in all of human history. **Just like the memorials**

we've mentioned, Pearl Harbor, 9/11, Vietnam... just like the memorial we have a Dan Daniels Park. It tells us that someone sacrificed, someone bled, someone died for a greater cause! **The table of Christ isn't decoration. It's a declaration.** Everytime we take communion we are saying; "I live because Christ died." **At this table we remember His sacrifice, we renew our faith, and we rejoice in our hope.**

The next thing we need to see is that... **The Table Renews Our Faith.** Jesus says, "do this in remembrance of me" over and over again. Why? Because as we've said before... we forget. We have leaky memories. We like this world, we indulge on its ideals. We forget where we came from. We drift. Communion is God's way of pulling us back in. Its how we return our gaze back upon the cross. Communion is a time of renewal and repentance. **Communion isnt empty ritual but active renewal.** This passage itself calls us to a renewal of our love of Christ when it points to one who will betray Him. Look at **verses 21-23**. The disciples were all wondering is it me who will betray Christ. They were all contemplating their relationship with their messiah.

Such a statement would draw anyone into such a contemplative state. And this stands today. Each one of us must search our souls to determine are we a traitor to Christ. And the answer inevitably is yes. We betray him every day. Everytime we sin, everytime we turn our backs on his word. Everytime we worship something other than him. We are Judas. And yet... if we renew our faith in Him, and we confess our sins... he is faithful and just to forgive us and revive us and rejuvenate our fire for Him again! And of course **1 Corinthians 11:27-28** reminds us to examine ourselves. When we take communion we are to take it worthily. Now don't get me wrong... none of us are worthy. But if we are to take it in remembrance of our Lord's sacrifice, we too must make a sacrifice. We must lay our sins both known and unknown on the altar. **We must confess and repent and come to the table in humility.** So don't come to the table casually and flippantly. Come hungry. Come desperate for his grace. **At this table we remember His sacrifice, we renew our faith, and we rejoice in our hope.**

The last thing we need to see here is that... **The Table Rejoices In Our Hope.** Look again at **verses 16** again. Jesus says he will not eat this meal again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God. This indicates the fulfillment of the passover by the death and resurrection of Christ. So Jesus, had he stayed on earth in the flesh another year, yes, he could've ate it again with the disciples. But Jesus ascended and so we wait for another time to eat this meal with him. Do you know what this means. This table is not the end. It's a preview. It's an appetizer before the feast.

Revelation 19 calls that feast the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. One day every nation and tribe will sit at that table. No more sin, no more betrayl. No more Judas in the room. Just Jesus and his true disciples for all time. So everytime we eat and drink, we look back to the cross and look forward to the kingdom. **The table points back to His cross and forward to His coming.** When we celebrate the Lord's supper we celebrate an inheritance we've been promised but have not yet received. So we take this meal, not in despair, but in hope. Not in sorrow but in joy! **At this table we remember His sacrifice, we renew our faith, and we rejoice in our hope.**

Application

Here's the deal; the Lord's table is not about bread and juice. It's about Jesus. We remember His sacrifice. We renew our faith. We rejoice in our hope. This is a memorial. This is in remembrance. This is not the blood and body of Jesus... it represents the blood and body of Christ. This is not for salvation. We do this in worship for the salvation we've already received. So come and remember. Come to the table. Come and receive his grace again.

Conclusion

So let us take **Communion.**