Silverdale Baptist Church

Coming Together - Sharing a Celebration Meal •
COMMUNITY, COMMITMENT, AND COMMUNION • LUKE 22:14-20 • 02/24,25/2018

Main Point

The Lord's Supper gives us the opportunity to reflect on the sacrifice Jesus made for us.

Introduction

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

> **Begin by asking a couple of people in your group to share a story about the most celebrated or memorable meal they have ever been a part of. Have them include details, such as the menu, the company, the ambiance, the occasion—anything that made it special. Why do you think food and meals are so often a part of our celebrations in life?**
>
> **When you think of Scripture, what memorable meals come to mind?**

Consider the meals we share together. We rarely gather simply to eat, but also to serve and share with others. We typically celebrate special occasions by sharing a meal. These moments at the table communicate something about an event's importance, and they connect us to one another in a way that other activities do not. So it's no surprise that on the night before His death, Jesus chose to explain the significance of His suffering and death with a meal.

Discussion

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about our topic.

> HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ LUKE 22:14-20.

> **This scene with Jesus and His disciples took place during the annual Passover celebration. How did Jesus give new meaning to the Passover celebration?**

The Passover meal served as a reminder of God's deliverance, love, and power. Jesus used this significant time to teach about Himself and foreshadow His death on the cross. The Lord's Supper celebrates believers' spiritual and permanent deliverance from sins. Rather than dying for only one family, the Lamb of God died for all the world (see John 1:29).

> **What is the significance of the bread? What is the significance of the cup?**
>
> **As the disciples observed and listened to Jesus at the first Lord's Supper, what do you think might have been going through their minds? How much do you think they understood when Jesus spoke about His body and blood?**

Jesus' words "Do this in remembrance of me" (1 Cor. 11:24-25) convey the idea of a figurative memorial. The bread and juice are symbols or pictures of Jesus' body and blood. They serve as reminders for us that Jesus sacrificed His body on our behalf, to pay for our sins and make it possible for us to have a relationship with God.

> **Why do you think Christians need to be reminded about the meaning and purpose of the Lord's Supper?**

Before we partake of the Supper, we should think about the various elements of the communion "meal" and thank God for their specific application to our lives. What is our motive for participating in communion? Is the act an empty ritual that we perform just to keep from being different from those seated around us? Are we afraid of what others may think if we fail to partake? It is important to remember the symbolic representation each part of the communion service has in respect to our own spiritual status with Jesus. We always need to approach God in worship with humility and sincerity of heart... and participating in this "meal" together declares our unity.

Application

Identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to our lives.

> **As you reflect on what Christ has done for you, what are your feelings? What is an appropriate response to His sacrifice?**
>
> **When do you tend to approach worship or a part of the worship experience, such as the Lord's Supper, too lightly? What are some ways we can help each other guard against those complacencies and habits?**
>
> **How can you use the story of the Last Supper and its elements to share Jesus with someone?**

Prayer

Spend time thanking Christ for what He did for us. Ask God to continue to work in our church so that He will be glorified. Thank Him for the privilege of remembering His sacrifice together as the body of Christ through the practice of the Lord's Supper.

Commentary

> Luke 22:14-20

22:14-16. At the mealtime hour, they gathered in the upper room, built onto a flat Palestinian house. Each person found a place around the table to stretch out to eat. Jesus wanted to share one last Passover with His disciples. Jewish religious leaders wanted to kill Him and prevent Him from doing any more teaching or performing any more miracles in Jerusalem. He knew what lay ahead of Him in Jerusalem. But now, safely cloistered from His enemies, He had a final opportunity to prepare His followers for the events of the future. He needed one last time to give them a symbol to teach them the meaning of who He was and what He had done for them. Thus, He ate His final Passover with His disciples, knowing they would not share such a meal together until the great eschatological banquet around God's table in heaven. Then their redemption would be complete. Then Jesus' preaching that the kingdom had come near would be complete, and the kingdom would be fully present for eternity.

22:17-18. The Passover meal began with a cup of wine, which was blessed with thanksgiving for the meaning of the day. Jesus also took a cup of wine and blessed it. Often a host would give His cup as a special honor to a banquet guest. Jesus appears to share His own cup with all the family, rather than each drinking from His own cup. This symbolized their unity in facing what lay ahead and in looking forward to the final appearance of the kingdom of God. The Last Supper is a time of looking forward to two goals: the cross and the final heavenly banquet in the kingdom. Jesus underlined that this was His last supper. He would be with the Father at the final banquet the next time He partook of the wine.

22:19. Along with lamb, unleavened bread was also a central part of the Passover meal. The family, having recited the Exodus story through questions and answers and sung parts of the traditional Hallel collection of psalms in Psalms 113–118, would give a prayer of thanks over the bread and eat the Passover meal. Jesus apparently took the role of the father of the family and gave thanks for the bread. As He did so, He replaced the Passover celebration with a new celebration of unleavened bread. This one interpreted the bread not as representing what Israel had to carry out of Egypt but the body of Jesus broken on the cross for His followers.

It is difficult to know how the disciples would have reacted as Jesus spoke of His body given for them. Later they would realize what He had done and why He wanted them to repeat this rite again and again. No longer did they need to celebrate the Passover and look back to the Exodus redemption. Now they could celebrate the Lord's Supper or Last Supper and look back to what Jesus did for them by dying on the cross. Jesus

would no longer drink and eat physically and visibly with them, but each generation of disciples could remember His desire to eat this last meal and the meaning He gave to it.

22:20. Passover included four cups of wine drunk at specific intervals. The last two came after the meal and were separated by the reading of the rest of the Hallel Psalms. Jesus took the occasion of one of these cups to again transform the meaning of Passover, transforming the Jewish celebration into the Christian Easter. The cup they drank served as an eternal reminder that Jesus had spilled His blood for them. Passover celebrated the Old Covenant ratified on Sinai (see Exod. 19–24). The Lord's Supper celebrates the New Covenant of Jeremiah 31:31 written on the hearts of the people rather than on tablets of stone. As blood sacrifices sealed the Old Covenant (see Exod. 24), so Christ's blood would seal and ratify the New Covenant.

No longer would they need to look back to Egypt and Sinai for their redemption. No longer would they need to celebrate a yearly day of atonement. Now they looked to Jesus and His death on the cross as the sole and sufficient means for their atonement. Jesus would no longer celebrate Passover. His followers would no longer need to celebrate Passover. Now they would celebrate the Lord's death until He came again.