

# ALL !N WITH JORDAN EASLEY

## A Seat At The Table

*Encounters With Jesus | Part 1 | Matthew 26:17-30*

### INTRODUCTION

Some moments in life change everything. An encounter with Jesus, the day you get married, or the moment you become a parent are all experiences that can redefine your story. The disciples had many such encounters with Jesus, and each one shaped their faith, built their character, and defined their mission.

Imagine being invited to dinner by someone you deeply admire. You arrive expecting a wonderful evening, but instead, they announce that this will be your last meal together. This is precisely what happened at the Last Supper. The disciples walked into the upper room expecting a celebration, but Jesus used this encounter to prepare them for a reality that would shatter their assumptions and change the world forever.

### KEY POINTS

#### 1. Jesus Confronts Human Expectations With Divine Reality

The disciples gathered for the Passover meal with a specific mindset. This annual feast was a time of joy and victory, celebrating Israel's freedom from slavery in Egypt. They reclined at the table, a posture symbolizing rest and liberty, fully expecting a night of fellowship. Their hope was that Jesus, the Messiah, was on the verge of establishing His earthly kingdom. But in the middle of their celebration, Jesus spoke words that created emotional whiplash: "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me." He took their expectation of victory and confronted it with the hard reality of betrayal and suffering.

We often come to God with our own set of expectations. We have plans for our lives, our careers, and our families, and we expect God to bless them. But what happens when His plan looks different from ours? Jesus's words at the table remind us that God's ways are higher than our ways. An encounter with Jesus often means trading our assumptions for His truth. It requires us to lay down our vision of how things should be and trust that His plan, even when it involves hardship, is ultimately for our good and His glory.

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### **2. Seasons of Doubt Require a Self-Examination of Our Faith**

In the face of Jesus's shocking announcement, the disciples responded with distress and denial. One by one, they asked, "Surely not I, Lord?" Even Judas, the betrayer, feigned innocence. In their hearts, they likely believed they would never abandon Jesus. Yet, when their assumptions were shattered and the pressure mounted, they all fell short. Peter denied Him, and the rest fled in fear. Their failure is a powerful reminder for us. It is easy to think we would never turn our backs on God, but without His strength, we are all capable of falling.

When your assumptions about God are shattered, how do you respond? Do you run in fear, or do you run to Him in faith? Seasons of doubt and confusion are not a time for self-righteous confidence but for humble self-examination. Instead of saying, "Surely not I," our prayer should be, "Lord, help me stay faithful to you." We must recognize our own weakness and depend completely on God's grace to sustain us, especially when it is hard to trust His plan. True strength is found not in our own resolve, but in our surrender to Him.

### **3. Jesus Establishes a New Covenant Through His Sacrifice**

As the meal continued, Jesus took the traditional Passover elements and gave them a radical new meaning. He took the bread, broke it, and said, "This is my body." He took the cup and declared, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." For centuries, the Passover lamb's blood saved the Israelites from physical death. Now, Jesus presented Himself as the ultimate Passover Lamb. His blood would establish a new covenant, one prophesied by Jeremiah, offering forgiveness and eternal life not through the law, but by grace through faith in Him.

The Last Supper was a mission statement from Jesus. He was declaring that salvation would no longer come from animal sacrifices and adherence to the old law. Instead, hope, forgiveness, and a right relationship with God are found only through His broken body and shed blood. This new covenant is a gift, not something we can earn. Have you truly received this gift? Responding to this encounter means you remember His sacrifice, receive His grace, and respond by surrendering your whole life to Him as your Savior and Lord. Your identity is now found in Christ, and your mission is to live for Him.

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### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Think of a time when your expectations for a situation were completely different from what God allowed to happen. How did that experience challenge or strengthen your faith?
2. The disciples responded to Jesus's prediction with denial and later with fear. What are some practical ways you can cultivate a response of faith and dependence on God when you face seasons of doubt or hardship?
3. How does understanding that you are saved by the new covenant in Jesus's blood, not by your own works, change the way you approach your daily life, your relationships, and your mission to make a difference for the Kingdom?

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