

Luke 22:1-38

We eat to remember and to have hope for tomorrow.

The last few weeks we have had the joy of being around family (AZ and CA) and whenever family is gathered, there are stories told. Some good, some more harrowing! All forming.

These are the things that establish the identity of the family. And for most of us around the table, these stories are well known. To others (to the young, those new to the family) they are new and enlightening. Giving children what they need to answer their therapist when asked about their family of origin!

“One of the things that binds us together is remembering the past. Remembering the past can strengthen our love for one another in the present. It may strengthen our love for one another as families. We have photos and videos to remind us of days past. Some past events become part of the family tradition and are told over and over again because they are particularly significant or humorous.” TS

Most of these stories are told during meals... It's human tradition. It anchors us, comforts us, and stirs us on. We need more of it.

Israel had a meal specifically to capture its story and to tell it every year. Of exodus out of Egypt. Of slavery and freedom. This is Passover.

It's a story retold in our text today, and given a new chapter that changes everything!

This is the central meal of Christianity - maybe the most important thing we do when we gather...

The Lord's Supper anchors us to the past and gives us hope for what lies ahead.

“We retell Christ's death every time we celebrate the Lord's Supper, for remembering what Christ has done for us strengthens us for the present and the future.” TS

We eat to remember and to have hope for tomorrow.

Context: Merging of the feasts - unleavened bread and Passover.

Those plotting to kill Jesus, to end his teaching...Chief priests and officers (temple law enforcement) conspire with Judas to betray Jesus seeking an opportunity in the absence of a crowd. It's coming.

It was the day to sacrifice the Passover lamb. Peter and John were sent by Jesus to prepare the meal and the place. No one knows the logistics but Jesus.

“That evening the Passover was observed in a home or room reserved for the occasion. The lamb was roasted on a pomegranate spit (M. Pesahim 7.1). Inside, the company dressed in festive white and reclined at tables with the leader at the head...

In Jesus' time the celebration had added elements beyond the Old Testament's prescriptions. There was a seder, a set order of service (M. Pesahim 10.1–9). The celebrants reclined while they ate because they were no longer slaves (cf. Exodus 12:11). It was the host's duty to interpret each of the foods on the table as it related to their deliverance from Egypt. The bitter herbs recalled their bitter slavery. The stewed fruit, by its color and consistency, recalled the misery of making bricks for Pharaoh. The roasted lamb brought to their remembrance the lamb's blood applied to the doorposts, their eating of the lamb within their house, and the death angel's passing over them as it destroyed the firstborn of Egypt.”
Hughes

As the host, Jesus gives these elements new imagery. It is exactly what Israel has been longing for.

We Eat to Remember

Christian discipleship is primarily reminder.

Jesus said in the great commission to “teach new disciples all that I have taught you...” The will always be those new to the table, but most of us around it know the stories but we need to regularly remember them.

2 Peter 1:1–2 “Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: [2] May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.” (ESV)

2 Peter 1:12–15 “Therefore I intend always to remind you of these qualities, though you know them and are established in the truth that you have. [13] I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to stir you up by way of reminder, [14] since I know that the putting off of my body will be soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me. [15] And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things.” (ESV)

So this is what we always endeavor to do... remind each other of the good news of Jesus.

Here Jesus is establishing the place of our story, what we are meant to remember.

Luke 22:14–15 “And when the hour came, he reclined at table, and the apostles with him. [15] And he said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.” (ESV)

Luke 22:37 “For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me: ‘And he was numbered with the transgressors.’ For what is written about me has its fulfillment.” (ESV)

Isaiah 53:7–12

[7] He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,
yet he opened not his mouth;
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,
so he opened not his mouth.

[8] By oppression and judgment he was taken away;
and as for his generation, who considered
that he was cut off out of the land of the living,
stricken for the transgression of my people?

[9] And they made his grave with the wicked
and with a rich man in his death,

although he had done no violence,
and there was no deceit in his mouth.

[10] Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him;
he has put him to grief;
when his soul makes an offering for guilt,
he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days;
the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.
[11] Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied;
by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant,
make many to be accounted righteous,
and he shall bear their iniquities.
[12] Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many,
and he shall divide the spoil with the strong,
because he poured out his soul to death
and was numbered with the transgressors;
yet he bore the sin of many,
and makes intercession for the transgressors.” (ESV)

Fulfillment finds its home here in Jesus.

He reaches backward to give the basis for what’s going down.

While for the Apostles this is new - for us it is the regular reminder of the finished work of Jesus for us.

Significant - Jesus won’t eat it again until his Kingdom comes in full.

Here is what the meal reminds us:

Luke 22:19 “And he took 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.” (ESV)

His body given for us. (Questions of what this means “is it really his body?” Differing answers over history - symbolic of his body and we consume it in his very real presence with us.)

Answers our need. Humanity was made to dwell with God. But from the garden, sin has marred our ability to stand before our Creator - a holy God. So humanity has always strived to gain the perfection required. Even when rescue from slavery occurred, the law was incapable of producing what it demanded.

So we needed a substitute. Someone to take our place.

Think of the book Hunger Games. When Katniss offers herself as tribute in the place of her sister - saving her sister's life.

Jesus as substitute takes our place - in both obedience and judgment. Needing a life perfectly following the way of God, we have it in Jesus. He also stands in our place on the cross - fully meeting the wrath our sin deserves.

“As represented and predicted in this celebration of the Lord’s Supper, Jesus’ body will be the once-and-for-all fulfillment of the ceremonies surrounding the Passover lamb, as he will become the sacrificial atonement on the basis of which God will “pass over” the sins of the people.” - ESV Study

Luke 22:20 “And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.” (ESV)

Blood. Israel has a long history with blood. Not just as an archaic way of worship - but steady reminder of a life taking the place of those apart from God. In the garden, blood flows to cover the shame of humanity. In the Temple, blood flows to cover the sin of the people. Year in and year out.

Jesus’ blood though is sufficient.

Hebrews 10:1–10 “For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. [2] Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? [3] But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. [4] For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

[5] Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,

“Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,
but a body have you prepared for me;

[6] in burnt offerings and sin offerings
you have taken no pleasure.

[7] Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come to do your will, O God,
as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.’”

[8] When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), [9] then he added, “Behold, I have come to do your will.” He does away with the first in order to establish the second. [10] And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” (ESV)

A new covenant in his blood - a covenant of grace - of life in him. A new covenant that was promised and finds its fulfillment in Jesus.

Jeremiah 31:31–34 “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, [32] not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. [33] For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. [34] And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” (ESV)

Forgiveness. His way written on our hearts. Made to be his people, forever. This is what the meal reminds us of - roots us in the finished work of Jesus for us.

“Although the disciples did not understand Jesus’ words and actions then, the symbolism expresses union with him, since Jesus identifies the bread with his body and the fruit of the vine with his blood and tells his disciples to eat and drink. They are to “ingest” and “drink” him metaphorically so that he becomes

part of them. The symbolism communicates union between the partakers and the body and blood of Christ.”

His righteousness ours. His future ours. Union with Christ. It is exactly what the NT belabors to tell us.

“When I base my Christian life on my Christian experience, I become locked in the labyrinth of my own performance. I am only as sure of God as my current emotions and obedience allow. My eyes are fixed on myself. The gospel, the good news, is the way the Holy Spirit turns our eyes away from ourselves and onto Christ. The gospel brings you into union with Christ. Christ enters your heart and gives you faith. By that faith, you receive Christ and all his fullness. Faith fixes your eyes on Christ and rests in him.” Rankin Wilbourne

“If I am united to Christ, then all that is his is mine. So long as my heart, will and mind are one with Christ's in his word, I can approach God with the humble confidence that my prayers will be heard and answered.” Sinclair B. Ferguson,

This is for those that believe in Him - you are justified, kept, given life to live. This meal reminds us.

There is a kind of remembering that summons us afresh to the truth that our whole lives depend upon the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We Eat to Have Hope for Tomorrow

Christianity, while rooted in ancient promise and fulfillment in Christ, looks forward to an eternity with Him. All things reconciled to him - made right. All sad things are untrue.

Glimpses of that in this meal.

Luke 22:16 “For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” (ESV)

Luke 22:18 “For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” (ESV)

Even in establishing this supper, Jesus is looking forward to the marriage supper of the lamb.

Revelation 19:6–9 “Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out,

“Hallelujah!
For the Lord our God
the Almighty reigns.
[7] Let us rejoice and exult
and give him the glory,
for the marriage of the Lamb has come,
and his Bride has made herself ready;
[8] it was granted her to clothe herself
with fine linen, bright and pure”—

for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

[9] And the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” And he said to me, “These are the true words of God.” (ESV)

You are invited! In Christ, this is where you are headed.

No matter what life throws our way we have hope in what’s coming. With the Spirit’s help (comforting, guiding us) we keep our eyes on the horizon.

Christians are not fearful, freaked-out people. We are people of promise by the blood of Christ. Hope always wins.

And you don’t wait alone!

Luke 22:17 “And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, “Take this, and divide it among yourselves.” (ESV)

This is a shared meal of reminder and hope, in community. With the family of faith.

Paul would correct the Corinthian church for messing up the meal. They would eat individually, or the wealthy would go ahead of the poor... This meal evens the field, is a place of unity and humility as those that belong to Jesus.

1 Corinthians 11:33 “So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for one another—” (ESV)

“the Lord’s Supper is not just an individual meal. It is a church meal, involving fellowship with other believers, a family meal by which we are bound together to the Lord and to one another.”

A meal of kingdom citizens now - sustenance for the pilgrimage through life.

Luke 22:28–30 “You are those who have stayed with me in my trials, [29] and I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom, [30] that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” (ESV)

“What Christians share—the salvation Christ’s death and resurrection won for them—forms their very identity.”

And our identity looks forward.

“Whenever we celebrate the Lord’s Table, we should eat with an eye to the ultimate Communion. This is why Paul added, “For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes” (1 Corinthians 11:26). The eagerness of our Savior’s heart for this meal ought to set our hearts to racing. This is the heart of God!”

We eat to remember, to have hope for tomorrow, and...

We Eat Until We Smell Like Jesus

I have increasing grace for the apostles in this account because occasionally I do stupid things...

We will some times talk about how often we take communion. Some churches do it quarterly, or monthly, we do it weekly. For some logistics and costs play into

the decision, but I don't want to follow Jesus only when the logistics and finances are in order!

We eat until we don't respond wrongly.

In our text we have concerning immediate response to the institution of the Lord's Supper.

Betrayal.

Luke 22:21–23 “But behold, the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table. [22] For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!” [23] And they began to question one another, which of them it could be who was going to do this.” (ESV)

Judas is in the room. For the price of a slave he will give Jesus up. And it will be his downfall. There is steady temptation for all of us to give up Jesus for other idols and some coin. Even if betrayal is a one-off, the rest don't have it together.

Competition.

Luke 22:24 “A dispute also arose among them, as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest.” (ESV)

Who is the greatest? Who gets the seats of honor in this Kingdom? The apostles still have a wrong view of what redeeming Israel was to look like and rather than rejoicing with Jesus they jockey for place and privilege. Where they are supposed to be like him they want to be little kings themselves...

Luke 22:26–27 “But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. [27] For who is the greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? But I am among you as the one who serves. (ESV)

Where Jesus washes their feet, serving them.

Denial.

Ending the competition Jesus lets them know that Satan has demanded to “have you.” It’s a plural you so it applies to all of them. But Jesus has prayed so he tells Peter, when you turn again, strengthen your brothers. Peter thinks he is willing to die for Jesus.

Luke 22:34 “Jesus said, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me.” (ESV)

And he will. The warning flows into the group missing the point about packing a sword for the journey ahead!

We are meant for more. To see Christ in this meal. What he does, how he loves and serves, then live from that.

“A greater love for Christ and his priorities displaces love for ourselves, as the magnitude of his selfless sacrifice for us touches and transforms our hearts.”
Bryan Chapell

I wonder how these guys looked back years later to their response to the Supper. Did they lament not jumping up to serve alongside Jesus? To become like him, to smell like him. And I don’t want to look back and think of the ways I have walked out of the room and fallen for these same things. It’s why we need the reminder.

It has been said that Martin Luther answered a parishioner’s question: "Pastor, why is it week after week you preach to us the Gospel? We've read your books, we know you to be a brilliant man. Why do we never move on? When do we get past this, on to something else?" And he said, "Beloved, because week after week, you forget it. You will never be without your need for the Gospel, so I will never cease to preach it to you."

So we keep eating. To be reminded, to have hope, and to smell like Jesus.

Eat up. Eat this meal often.

You are Christ’s. His redeeming work is for you and is now flowing through you.

We eat to remember and to have hope for tomorrow.

This is the best family story to tell. It establishes our identity, our character, our future. And we get to tell it around the table.

Let's eat!