



The Lord's Supper

Sermon for November 14, 2021

Luke 22:7–20

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Sermon Introduction

In November in the United States we celebrate a holiday called Thanksgiving.

It is a feast and celebration to thank God for his blessings.

It is a time when family and friends connect during a meal.

That's why in November we are doing a three-week sermon series on Food and Family.

Today we will look at Luke chapter 22 and read about the last meal Jesus ate with his disciples before he was executed on the cross.

That last supper that Jesus ate with his followers was also the first Lord's Supper.

We will celebrate the Lord's Supper today, after the sermon.

I am going to read our scripture passage now.

Please listen and open your hearts to God speaking to us in His Word.

Luke 22:7-20

7 Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed.

8 So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat it."

9 They said to him, "Where will you have us prepare it?"

10 He said to them, "Behold, when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house that he enters

11 and tell the master of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?'

12 And he will show you a large upper room furnished; prepare it there."

13 And they went and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

14 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.

16 For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

17 And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves.

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."

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."

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.

Together we read Isaiah 40:8:

"The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever."

Please pray with me.

Father in Heaven, thank you for sending Jesus the Lamb of God to die for our sins.

Through Jesus we can have a relationship with you, because He has washed us clean.

Holy Spirit, our hearts are hungry for you.

Please open our minds and hearts to understand the Word of God that is before us today.

We pray in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

Here is the main point, or big idea, of today's sermon.

Big Idea: The Lord's Supper looks back with thanks, and looks forward with hope.

Let's begin by talking about the Passover.

We see it mentioned in verses 7 and 8.

7 "Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed.

8 So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat it.'"

Passover was the most important feast and celebration for the Jewish people.

It is called Passover because the Angel of Death passed over God's people in Egypt.

We heard about this earlier in the service in the reading from Exodus 12.

The Angel of Death killed the first-born males in Egypt as a judgment.

It was God's punishment of Pharaoh for enslaving the Jewish people.

But some of the first-born males in Egypt survived that night.

The angel passed over some of the houses.

How did the Angel of Death know which homes to pass over?

He saw the blood of a lamb.

It was a sign of God's protection over the people in that house.

Listen to what God said in Exodus 12:12-13

12 "On that night I will pass through the land of Egypt and strike down every firstborn son and firstborn male animal in the land of Egypt. I will execute judgment against all the gods of Egypt, for I am the Lord!

13 But the blood on your doorposts will serve as a sign, marking the houses where you are staying. When I see the blood, I will pass over you. This plague of death will not touch you when I strike the land of Egypt."

The blood of a lamb provided a sign to save the people from death.

The lamb also provided a meal.

Listen to Exodus 12:7-8.

7 "They are to take some of the blood and smear it on the sides and top of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the animal.

8 That same night they must roast the meat over a fire and eat it along with bitter salad greens and bread made without yeast."

God told the people to eat the lamb that night when the angel passed over.

God also told them to kill and eat a lamb every year in the future.

Passover was a meal to celebrate and remember.

We see this in Exodus 12:14.

14 "This is a day to remember. Each year, from generation to generation, you must celebrate it as a special festival to the Lord. This is a law for all time."

Jesus was perfectly faithful to God's law.

That's why Jesus celebrated the Passover with his disciples according to God's law.

They met together in a room, and they gathered around a table to eat a meal and celebrate the blessings of God.

Why do we have celebrations like this that include food?

Is it enough to simply remember God's blessings in our minds?

I don't think so.

Do you ever taste a special food, and remember your mom?

Or smell something and remember a special place or event in the past?

God gave us eyes and ears and noses and hands and mouths.

God wants us to enjoy and remember his blessings.

That's why He gave us signs and symbols that we can see and smell and taste.

When God's people ate the Passover lamb with bread and wine, they could smell and taste and enjoy God's many blessings.

Passover was a holiday meal for the Jews to celebrate and remember God's work in their lives.

And the Lord's Supper is a meal for Christians to celebrate and remember God's work in our lives. Let's turn our attention now to communion.

We also call this sacrament the Lord's Supper because it is the Lord Jesus who gives us this meal.

Look again with me at Luke 22:19-20.

19 And Jesus 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."

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."

The Passover meal includes lamb, bread, and cups of wine.

The lamb is not mentioned in Luke 22, however.

Because Jesus is the Lamb of God.

Jesus is the lamb who died to protect his people from the Angel of Death.

In verse 19 Jesus said, "do this to remember me."

What did Jesus want them to remember?

That on the cross, the blood of Jesus was poured out for our sin, like the cup of wine was poured out during Passover.

When Jesus poured out his blood for us, he was making a new covenant.

A covenant is a promise between God and His people.

The new covenant is a promise from God to never punish us for our sins.

God never punishes sin twice.

Jesus died to wash away the sins of everyone who believes in Him.

Because Jesus is fully human and fully God, his sacrifice can remove all of our sin and shame permanently.

If you are trusting in him as your Savior and Lord, you have eternal life, hope, and peace.

That is the promise of the new covenant.

Jews celebrate Passover to look back and remember being saved in Egypt.

Christians celebrate the Lord's Supper instead.

We look back and remember being saved when Jesus died on the cross.

The Lord's Supper and baptism are the two sacraments in the Christian church.

Sacraments are physical pictures of God's spiritual promises.

Augustine was a church leader from North Africa.

1600 years ago Augustine said a sacrament is "an outward and visible sign of an inward and enduring grace."

The water of baptism is a visible sign of the spiritual washing of our sin.
In the same way, the Lord's Supper is a visible sign that helps us understand spiritual truths.
We don't put our hope in the visible water, or in the bread and cup.
We put our hope in the invisible grace of God.

Friends, we don't come to the table to have our stomachs filled with bread.
We come to this table to have our hearts filled with God's grace.
Jesus designed this meal with bread and wine to help you see Him more clearly.
Jesus wants you to remember what he did for you in the past.
Because that will help you trust Jesus in the present and the future.

When you are eating the bread and drinking the cup today, I want you to invite Jesus to speak to you.
Through the sacrament, Jesus says to us:
"Remember that my sacrifice on the cross washed away all your sin.
The Angel of Death has passed over you!
Do not let your heart be troubled with guilt and shame.
I am preparing a place for you in my Father's house.
There you will live forever.
And there will be no tears, no sorrow, no pain."

This meal helps you to hear Jesus remind you about these truths.
Remembering these things will help you face the challenges of this week, knowing that you are not alone.
That is one of the benefits of this sacrament.

We call it the "Lord's Supper."
It is not our Supper, where we decide to think about the Lord.
Instead, Christ himself is the host of the meal.
We come to His table, where he feeds us spiritually.
We also sometimes use the word "communion" to describe the Lord's Supper.
Communion is related to the word community.
It is a word that speaks about relationship.
The disciples were friends from very different backgrounds.
They had conflicting political views, and different personalities.
They formed a special community because Jesus brought them together.
Communion is primarily about our relationship to Christ.
It celebrates a vertical relationship, that has horizontal impact.

We must remember that we are only a community because Christ made each us into individual members of God's one household.

Our union with Christ is the reason and foundation of our union with each other.

At the table we are nourished and encouraged by our unity with Christ, so we can work to build unity with one another in Christ.

Okay, let's review a little bit.

Do you remember our Big Idea for today?

Big Idea: The Lord's Supper looks back with thanks, and looks forward with hope.

We have thought about how the Passover celebration looked back to when God rescued his people from slavery in Egypt.

A lamb was killed to save the people from death.

And then the people ate the lamb with bread and wine as a celebration of thanks to God.

We have discussed how the Lord's Supper looks back to God's rescue of his people from sin through the sacrifice of Jesus.

Jesus the Lamb of God was killed to save us from death.

Jesus offers us bread and wine, as a picture of his body and blood.

We eat and drink as a celebration of thanks to God.

Today, the sacrament of communion connects us more deeply with Jesus our savior, and with each other as a church family.

The Lord's Supper also looks ahead with hope.

Let's talk now about the future meal that Jesus mentions in Luke 22:18.

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."

Jesus is talking about the time when he will come back to earth.

When Jesus comes again, everyone who is still in captivity to sin will be sent to hell forever.

But God will see who is covered by the blood of the Lamb.

God will take to heaven all the people who have been washed of their sin by the blood of the Lamb of God.

And when we get to heaven, there will be a big party.

Did you know that Jesus is inviting you to a wedding party?

Listen to the vision that the apostle John saw.

It's a vision of what will happen one day in heaven.

Revelation 19:6-9

6 "Then I heard again what sounded like the shout of a vast crowd or the roar of mighty ocean waves or the crash of loud thunder: "Praise the Lord! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.

7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and let us give honor to him. For the time has come for the wedding feast of the Lamb, and his bride has prepared herself.

8 She has been given the finest of pure white linen to wear." For the fine linen represents the good deeds of God's holy people.

9 And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb." And he added, "These are true words that come from God."

Amen.

My friends, this is one wedding you don't want to miss.

If you accept the invitation from Jesus to be his follower, you will be washed of your sin by his blood. Then you will be clothed in white so you can attend the wedding celebration in heaven.

You will be seated at the King's table at the Wedding Feast of the Lamb.

People from every culture and country will be there.

Jesus said in Matthew 8:11,

18 "many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven."

That Banquet will occur some day in the future.

Will you be there?

If you are trusting in Christ alone for your salvation, then there is a seat at the table for you.

Christ has written your name on the place card.

He has set your name on the table before your seat.

Maybe you aren't sure about these things.

That's okay.

We are all on a spiritual journey.

God is not finished writing your story!

Maybe you don't know if you are in God's covenant family and have a seat waiting for you at the supper.

If you don't know, then please don't take the bread and cup today.

Not yet.

Let's talk and pray together some more about all these things.

I hope someday soon you can participate in the Supper knowing you are a full member of God's household.

If you have trusted in Christ and are walking with him, then this table is for you.

This table does not belong to this church, or this denomination.

It is the Lord's Table.
We come to this table to give us hope that the story is not over.
Our lives are often hard today, here in this broken world.
We suffer and struggle today.

However, we can look forward with hope to the wedding feast we will attend one day.
It will have an abundant supply of the best food and drink.
But the best part of the feast won't be the food.
It will be the presence of Christ with us.
When the disciples ate the Passover with Jesus, they were not focused on the bread and wine and the roasted lamb.
They were focused on Jesus the Lamb of God, because he was their leader, their best friend, and their Savior.

In the same way, we do not focus on the small piece of bread and little cup on this table today.
The amount we eat and drink is small.
But this is a lavish feast, my friends!
It is a feast, because the bread and cup are only pictures of the real food we receive at this table.
It is Christ himself that our hearts are hungry for.
And it is Christ himself that we get at his Table.
Let's pray together now.

Jesus, we are sometimes jealous of the disciples, because they walked and talked with you 2,000 years ago.
But thank you that we are here with us in Spirit.
Thank you for the pictures of salvation you give us in the sacraments.
When we come to your table, Lord Jesus, we come with hungry hearts.
We come to remember you, and we ask you to fill us with peace and hope.
Please do this for our good, and for your glory.
Amen.