



**Home : Sermons : February 11, 2007**

## **The Last, and the First, Supper – *Luke 22:1-23***

**Introduction** – Jesus now gathers His disciples together to perform an act that would speak theology; it would speak the gospel. Specifically, He gave them a meal to share. It is a meal that speaks more volumes than any theory, any proposition. The best way of finding out what it says is to do it, not to talk about it; and we have the privilege of enjoying this act each Lord's Day. In the midst of the gospel story of Luke, however, there are several other lessons to learn.

**Two Preparations for Passover** (vv1-13) – There is a great contrast set here in two stories of the preparations for the Last Passover Supper.

**The Betrayer in the Midst** (vv1-6) – While Jesus was teaching in public, the chief priests and scribes could not do anything, for fear of the people (21:37-22:2), and Satan saw this as his great opportunity to work from within (4:13, 22:3). There is something satanic and sinister about things that happen in the darkness, at night, in secret, hiding from the community of faith, and out of envy (1 Thess 5:5-10).

**Judas** – Of course, nothing is hidden from God; Judas is doing just what God had already predestined (Acts 1:16) and Jesus already knew that Judas was going to betray Him (John 6:64-71). Jesus had allowed Judas to remain unnoticed by the other disciples, even knowing that Judas was a thief (John 12:4-6). And so Judas went to the chief priests and came up with a “secret” plan, ironically fulfilling prophecy (Zech 12).

**The Faithful Disciples** (vv7-13) – Much like the time when Jesus sent two disciples into Bethany for a colt, He sends Peter and John ahead to a man and a room chosen for Christ's last Passover meal with His disciples (19:28ff). Judas thought he was doing something in secret. In great contrast, Peter and John prepare for the Passover knowing that Jesus already knows all the details. Luke also emphasizes that the “*Day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover must be killed*” has come.

**The First Supper** (vv14-20) – In the midst of this “secret” betrayal, Jesus pours out His heart to His disciples: this is why I have come. I have come because of betrayers. I have come to be the Passover Lamb. Jesus had come to fulfill Passover (v16).

**Passover** – Instituted at the Exodus by God through Moses, God had the Israelites celebrate this ritual annually, one of three feasts when all faithful Israelites would travel to Jerusalem and join in a sacrificial feast-meal. The lamb was central to the meal; and the lamb was the sacrifice. Its blood had been taken and spread over the doorposts of the homes where the Angel of Death would be signaled to pass-over the home and not bring death upon the firstborn. Like the Peace-Offering, the lamb was then eaten by the family in a sacrificial and covenantal meal before the Lord. That which had been sacrificed was eaten by the beneficiaries of the sacrifice. God instructed the people in future generations that each Passover meal was a participation in that first Passover and first Exodus (Ex 12:21-28).

**The Lord's Supper** – In the midst of this meal, Jesus institutes what becomes the Lord's Supper. In the Passover meal, there were several cups, and Luke mentions cup-bread-cup (v17, 19, 20). And in the Lord's Supper, the main interpretation of the crucifixion is given to us, not only in words, but in ritual. Jesus wanted us to hear and touch and taste this truth, and those of us who are too Hellenistic-minded, too Platonic in our thinking, need to change our ways. First, Jesus associates the meal, and hence His death, with the coming of the kingdom (v18). Those who sit with Him at the table, and serve as He serves, are granted a kingdom with Christ (v17-18, 26, 28-30). Second, He says that His body is “*given for you* (v19),” pointing to the fact that Jesus is offered as a Substitute for us in sacrifice and that He is offered as life and food for His people. Third, He says that His blood will bring in a new covenant, a covenant sealed in His blood which was shed for us.

**The Betrayer in the Midst** (vv21-23) – As all the gospels make clear, while Jesus knew the hand of His betrayer, He cloaks his identity from the disciples who question among themselves who this could possibly be.

**Some Applications** – There is much more going on in Luke's narrative than simply the establishment of the Lord's Supper. We can see our Lord's heart and His steady providence in the midst of establishing a new, simple rite.

**The Fervent Desire of Jesus** – This should overshadow all teachings on Jesus being our greatest treasure. Regardless of how we are feeling (even right now) Jesus' desire then was to lay down His life for His sheep; and it remains His fervent desire now as well. Take, eat, take, drink, He will say meal after meal after meal. We are Jesus' great treasure. Right now.

**The All-Knowing Providence of God** – We will see this over and over throughout the Passion account. God is not only in control of the broad plan of salvation, but every person's thoughts, actions, intentions – everything. For those with faith, this

creates a deep place of security in the midst of every possible trial.

**Gladness and Simplicity of Heart** – This simple rite will be repeated regularly by the disciples of Jesus after His ascension (see Acts 2:46-47). It should be noted that this new sacrament sets aside the more complicated rituals with something quite simple – the partaking of bread and wine. But, with simple understanding, there is gladness and the praising of God at this Table – for Jesus continues to give Himself for us.

*Dave Hatcher – February 11, 2007*