

# Luke 22:1-38

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Date: 08 March 2015

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[ 0 : 00 ] reorienting our misplaced loves. The first dinner table in the text is right there, verses 14 through 20 or so.

I call it the Lord's table. And when the hour came, He reclined at table and the apostles with Him, and He said to them, I've earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer, for I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

Now at first glance, this particular dinner table, the dinner table of our text, looks every bit like a place of belonging. I mean, here's Jesus with apostles.

They're at table, but there are hints. Even here in these opening verses that indicate that this dinner will be anything but ordinary.

I mean, that opening phrase just with foreshadowing begs the reader forward, when the hour came. What hour is this?

[ 1 : 09 ] What particular night are we in? And then that strange link that Jesus makes between the Passover, or listen to the way it sounds in the language in which He would have spoken it, the Pascha, and He connects it to His Pasco, the Passover and my sufferings, this strange union of His life, this hour, this meal.

Now the Passover, if you're not familiar with Jewish life and its religious history, nor with Christian faith and its interpretive force on that meal, was simply a Jewish holy day.

It was a day where the nation annually would celebrate their deliverance from Egypt. So it was a day that took a meal to look back to the time of Moses and to the moment when God really, in one sense, altered the identity of an entire people from slaves under Pharaoh to by the time they arrive at the mountain, He calls them my son.

This unique word for Israel. From slavery to sonship on the basis of this passing over and the releasing of a nation.

That's what they were celebrating. So if ever there was a single meal in Israel's history to bring together their sense of belonging and becoming, this is the meal.

[ 3 : 01 ] This is the meal where longing for relationship was met. This is the meal that validated their position in the world. And yet on this night of national pride, something profound is already underway.

The hour of Jesus had come. And this odd connection between this supper and his sufferings he is calling attention to. And then, there it is in verse 16.

His words actually shake this evening meal from any conventional understanding of celebration. He actually wants you to know, them to know, at the table, this is no ordinary dinner.

In fact, this is so unlike any dinner you've ever been to. This is the dinner that stands on the cusp of something that is being fulfilled.

And I'm not going to eat again until the kingdom of God actually arrives. I mean, this is before breakfast. This meal.

[ 4 : 13 ] Fulfillment. God's rule. He uses this language. You can almost just imagine, at that moment, you know, nobody's passing mashed potatoes anymore.

They didn't use silverware to my knowledge, but in our day, the clinking on the plates is done. The drinks are being held and not taken.

All eyes on Jesus at the head of the table. What? And then he mentions that incredible line.

He takes the bread, gives thanks. This is my body. Takes the cup, pour it out for you.

New covenant. My blood. This ancient meal, this ancient meal, celebrating the people's deliverance, from slavery to sonship, is according to Jesus, representing something in his own death, that's related to the kingdom, or as he says here, new covenant.

[ 5 : 31 ] This is a new meal. Well, what was the old meal? What was the old covenant? How are you going to understand what the new covenant is, if we don't know what the old covenant is?

This word is really unique in Luke. He only uses it one other time in chapter one. This word on covenant. And when he actually uses it there, an announcement under the Zacharias prophecy at the birth of his son, John, he mentions in chapter 72, that what God was doing in these early narratives of the Baptist and then Jesus, was showing mercy that was promised to the fathers, verse 72, chapter one, to remember his holy covenant.

And then he explains what it's in reference to, the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us that we being delivered from the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear. So the old covenant was one that God made with Abraham, in a moment of probably personal fear, regarding his human enemies, and God's promise that I will deliver you.

So if you want to know what the old covenant is, you've got to go all the way back to Genesis 15. What an amazing moment.

[ 6 : 51 ] And if you have your text, I would encourage you to take a look. Because what Jesus does is somehow related to what God has promised here.

In Genesis 15, we find Abraham, Abraham at this point, his name's not even changed yet, in a state of fear, verse one, fear not, the word of the Lord comes to him in a vision.

The context is one in which the human enemies, of Lot, and Abraham himself, are weighing on him, and he doesn't know how he's going to survive in the world.

He feels like he's in the midst of enemies that are going to overrun him. And the promise comes, the Lord shows him and says, fear not, I'm going to do something for you, through your offspring, take a look up at the stars, count them, you're going to be all right, they're going to be as numerous, or really, you're not going to be able to put a number, on the people that you're going to have.

And then he goes on, later in the chapter, verse 13, to tell him, that his offspring would be sojourning in a land, slaves there, for 400 years.

[ 8 : 10 ] But that he's going to call them out. And then he goes on in verse 18, to indicate that he's going to give them a land, a land that his enemies presently possess. He says, all of that I'm going to do.

I'm taking you. I'll deliver you from your enemies. I'll put you in a place, where you and I will live together. I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars in the heavens.

And in order to seal the deal, to cut the covenant, you have that bit in chapter 15, where the sun was going down, verse 12, a deep sleep comes upon him, and a darkness falls.

And the Lord, in some sense, what he does here is, he takes these heifers, verse 9, and these rams, and a turtle dove, and he kills these animals, drags the hind corners, quarters to the right, the front to the left, and in the chapter, God himself, comes down in some mysterious form.

Abram's sleeping, because he can't see this. And God passes through this blood, indicating, may it be done unto me, God, in the heavens, if I do not fulfill my covenant with you.

[ 9 : 42 ] That's the covenant. God, through blood, promising something to Abram. the text says that he took it by faith.

By the time then you get to Exodus 6, and the 400 years in Egypt has passed, you begin to see a return to that covenant.

The promise again is stated in Exodus 6. God is now speaking to Moses in verse 2. And he says, I appeared to Abraham, verse 4, I established my covenant with them for the land.

And then at the end of verse 5, and I've remembered my covenant. In other words, I have come now, after Israel's been in Egypt for 400 years, to make good on that plan.

And so that's what happens. They're told to take a lamb, spread the blood on the doorpost. God arrives in Egypt. You've seen it with Charlton Heston and the old black and whites now turn color.

[ 11 : 01 ] And God rolls through Egypt. And the son, the firstborn son of Egypt, is put down. And the sonship of Israel is saved.

And out they walk, under the blood of the covenant. And indeed, they inherit the land. Moses was given. And with it, Moses was given the law.

This is their part of the deal. You walk with me, I continue to walk with you. And in this, they were not able to hold up any end of a bargain.

Israel failed. This is why they were forced from the land, according to the scriptures. And so what was needed was a new deal. And I'm not talking FDR.

or Johnson. Or any other politician coming along. There needed to be a new deal struck between heaven and earth.

[12:10] Between the people that were to be sons and an inability to actually live in a relationship with the Lord of the heavens. And indeed, this covenant then is expanded.

And you see it in Jeremiah 31. By prophetic voice, it's worth looking at. Jeremiah 31, this covenant now is tracing its way through that something new is going to happen.

And this is actually the term that Jesus uses. This is where the new covenant comes in. Jeremiah 31, 31, 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.

Not like the covenant I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand, leading them from the land of Egypt. My covenant that they broke, though I was their husband. For this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel.

My law written within them. And I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God. And they shall be my people. And notice verse, the very end there, right before verse 34 ends, For I will forgive their iniquity.

[13:22] I will remember their sin no more. That's the new covenant. Not merely that, well, you got a new law that you still can't keep, but I'm actually going to alter your heart from the inside that will enable you by my spirit to walk in my ways.

And the indication of it is that you don't just get land, which for Israel and the Bible is continually the symbol of being able to live with God all the way from the garden.

Now you're going to get forgiveness of sins. And now Jesus comes. Now that backdrop is so important for you and me to understand because we have so little understanding of the biblical narrative.

But here He comes and He says, This cup is poured out for you the new covenant in my blood. But how does it come?

what is the ink that ratifies humanity's new deal with God? It's not God coming down in a cloud and walking in the midst of the blood of strewn sacrifices like of old.

[14:54] Jesus says, It is me and my death which is arriving by way of sentence and will be carried out before dinner tomorrow.

My body, my blood, one sacrifice for all people, one time for all sin.

That is the backdrop of the table to which we've come in the text. In other words, in this text, you have arrived at the night that the world has waited for from the beginning of time.

From the very first table seen in the Scriptures where Adam and Eve are in the garden, the place, and dwelling with God and they take a meal without their host and outside of His Word plunging humanity into desperate straits forced from the presence of God.

this is what accounts for the longing within your heart to be a table where you belong, where you know who you are.

[16:21] And it accounts for why we spend so much time using the table to indicate to others what we have become.

It's all going to be righted on this night. In other words, the Lord's table is a table of salvation. Let me put it to you as a Christian preacher.

This is the place where you belong. Jesus, your life. The gospel or good news is simply that the death of Jesus, His blood, shed on the cross is the answer whether you know it or not to what you really want and to what you really seek.

He is the substitute not only for your sin, He is the substitute for all the things that you are taking in instead. In Luke 24, after His resurrection, Jesus will tell the disciples, you are to be witnesses of these things, that is my sufferings, my resurrection, and you are to go through all the world preaching the forgiveness of sins.

That's what God is doing in human history. Let me put it to you differently. You ask yourself, what's God doing if there is a God? What He's doing is getting you back to the dinner table. That's it.

[17:55] in a sense, that's what God has been doing from the time that Adam and Eve sat down at a different table.

We're to dine in God's house under His roof feasting on His life, which is His Son, all provided for you. This is what you need faith to have.

as you sit on a stool in an airport or in a bar with your scotch and the sound of the ice wondering why you're alone in the world.

This is what you need when you actually sit and ask yourself, how do I get myself? How do I climb to be a part of that table where it really happens?

It all is met in Jesus. Let me put it differently. He not only meets your eternal need, He meets what you want every day.

[ 19 : 14 ] Well, what did the disciples make of this? You'd think they'd be like, where's the altar call? I'm coming forward. How come we don't have communion today? Well, here they are.

He'd indicated that all this was going to come at the hand of one, verse 21, that betrayed Him. So they began to question. The conversation now switches.

They're wondering, well, who's going to do him in? And of course, that arrives immediately at a dispute, verse 24, which arose among them as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest.

Well, well, you've heard of the island of misfit toys. Here we've got the table of misfit loves on full display. Judas, I'm not having any of that suffering table.

and the rest of them, well, that's fine, but I tell you, I'm going to be number two at that table. In Luke 14, we all laughed when Jesus told the parable of a wedding feast to put those who chose seats of honor in their place.

[ 20 : 33 ] Remember the parable when He said, oh, no, you took your seat a little too early. You thought you were at table two. Oh, sorry, that goes to this guy. Oh, you got the wrong card. Let me give you your table.

You take a look at it. You're table 53. We laughed because that was all about the scribes. This is all about the disciples.

Welcome to your table. Followers of Jesus, closest followers on the night of all nights showing their true colors, not any different from the rest.

In one sense, disciples are usually worse than the rest because we don't mind getting it all out in the open. These guys are just in an open dispute on who's the greatest.

You can almost see this taking place. Somebody ought to put it on the screen. My bet is that at least religious scribes had enough sense to go about their misplaced loves with a bit of social decorum.

[ 21 : 41 ] But not these guys. So what's Jesus going to do? Notice what he does. Verse 20 and forward, 25 and forward, he takes the Lord's table, the first table in the text that we've looked at, and he turns it into a lesson on the tables of our lives.

Verses 25 to 27, he interrupts, hey, guys, quiet. The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors, but not so with you.

Rather, let the greatest among you become the youngest, and the leader, the one who serves. For who is greater, the one who reclines at table, or the one who serves? It's not the one who reclines at table, but I'm among you as the one who serves.

It couldn't have been any clearer. Guys, let me tell you something about the way I want you to operate in the table, like me, serving. The Lord's table now moves towards salvation, but here, this table, your table today, actually begins to reveal the ethic of the kingdom.

He's basically said, I'm dying within a day for salvation. And he attaches to it the ethic of life for all who are saved. So, ethics is intimately connected with the Christian life.

[ 23 : 11 ] In fact, you will know how well you're doing with Christ when you simply look at how you're doing at table.

Jesus takes his death, which alone he can do for salvation and inaugurate the kingdom, and he connects it with the ethic of the same.

Let me put this the way my friend Ramell Williams Jr. would put it down at 107th and Michigan. Let me put this where you can get it. Where you can reach it.

what Jesus accomplished, past tense, on the cross for your salvation, turns everything we do, present tense, into an opportunity for service.

The Lord's table, which inaugurates the kingdom, has a direct influencing, binding force upon the table of your life and its ethics.

[ 24 : 17 ] service. So if we've been paying careful attention to Jeremiah 31, where it talked about the new covenant, interestingly, we would have actually seen there that the ethic of the kingdom

was already embedded in the promise of the same.

Let me explain this. This is fascinating to me. In Jeremiah 31, we always go there to talk about the new covenant that is the promise of salvation. But look in Jeremiah 31, verse 34, No longer shall each one teach his neighbor and his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me, here's the language, from the least to the greatest, declares the Lord.

And now Jesus borrowing, echoing those words, saying, Who's the greatest? He picks up the greatest and the youngest to indicate that the promise of salvation has been fulfilled, and from the very beginning it's been connected to the ethic of the kingdom.

The least you can do is begin to serve. Let me tell you what this does for us.

The Lord's table actually meets our heart's deepest longing for belonging. It also reorients our misplaced loves. It turns every dinner table into a place where you no longer have to prove what you've become or are trying to be.

[ 25 : 48 ] You no longer have to look for power. You no longer have to look for power. He saved you with the intention that you would serve others.

by nature, Christianity will push us out of a self-centered existence. This is what Martha needed to learn.

Hey, I'm doing all the work. Even service can get twisted with our misplaced loves. He said, no, no, Martha, no, no, Martha, Martha, Martha, Martha, come back to me.

Even Peter's going to need to learn this lesson again and again in Acts. Peter says, well, I'm glad God saved me and I'm part of the spiritual, what would we call it?

He's part of what would we put it in our, he's part of the majority culture. He said, I like Jesus, but I'm not eating with any Gentiles. Well, we do the same thing.

[ 26 : 55 ] We're all followers of Christ, but somehow we can't all get around the same table. Praise God for this church family. As you sit at table and look someone in the eye whose ethnic, cultural, racial background has nothing to do with you.

You are manifesting the learning curve of the ethic of the kingdom, which Peter needed to learn. Paul shut him down and served.

Let me just put it to you like church. Some churches, not ours generally, but some churches have a real problem getting people to serve. Why is that? Well, it's one of two reasons. One, people don't know how much they've actually been loved by Jesus.

Because if you actually knew how much he loved you and that you actually belonged, you wouldn't be worried about all this other stuff. You wouldn't be sitting around waiting for someone else to meet all your needs.

people. So, we actually, there's an indication here that when churches have people that don't serve, it's actually an indication yet that you actually haven't learned the gospel enough to know how much God loves you, how much Jesus loves you.

[ 28 : 31 ] Because if you knew how much he loved you, you'd belong, you'd serve. Or it's an indication that you're still convinced that all these other people need to be listening to you.

That they should be getting something done for you. Which is just an indication that you're still trying to climb a ladder of approval of other people. I don't know if it's your parents, I don't know if it's God, I don't know if it's your pastor, I don't know if it's your mother, I don't know if it's just your worldly fleshly desire to be great.

But this idea of belonging and becoming in Christ just goes away. I belong, you belong, He loves you, therefore live for others. The Lord's table, connected to our table, I can't think of all the practical applications that if we actually walk that out here in this room over the next three, five years, it does change this.

It changes our life, it changes our neighborhood, it changes our city, it changes our world. if we can just walk this out. Well, I've got so much else I want to do today.

Let me show you the third table in the text. Because there's actually three tables. The Lord's table, our daily tables, and then finally the eternal table.

[ 30 : 06 ] verse 28 and 29 and 30, you are those who have stayed with me in my trials, and I assign to you as my father assigned to me a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at my table in the kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

That's the eternal table. That's the encouragement we need to live out the ethic here. In other words, he says, hey guys, don't worry. quit arguing about who's got the most to offer here.

You're going to get a seat. That's what he says. You're going to get a seat at my table. In other words, you will belong. So stop talking about it.

And that misplaced thing you had on earth, you wanted all that power and all that prominence and how do I get to that table? You're going to judge. the twelve tribes of Israel.

In other words, he says, relax. No more climbing for either approval or significance. No more questioning whether you really belong.

[ 31 : 21 ] There's going to come a day when they're at the eternal table. You're going to be there. And everyone's going to know your name. And you're going to have important things to do.

I mean, Lisa and I were talking earlier about what we love regarding vacation when some of our kids can come home. What do we love when everyone comes home?

It's not so much the food. She said it as clear as you could say it. It's the fact that we're all here.

That day is coming. Do you understand that? A day is coming in heaven when we will all be there.

Even if you sit tonight by yourself, you can glory in the richness of your fellowship in Christ because you will be at table.

And here's the most stunning thing of all. It astounds me. Luke 12 37. Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes.

[ 32 : 32 ] Truly I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at table and he will come and serve them. I mean, you just want to back away from that text.

if I understand it correctly, it isn't just the 12 disciples on this night that he washed their feet and served them.

He did that one time on earth for the 12 representative of the whole. And he will do that again. with all our misplaced loves, with all our unmet longings, he's going to appear over your left shoulder, put drink before you, food on your table, you're his joy.

When you actually begin to see that, you meditate on that. I'm almost sorry I'm emotional because I don't want you to think, wow, I go to a church and the guy got emotional and he's just playing on our heart strings.

No, I'm not. I have expounded to you the word of God. These things are true. Here's what I want to say.

[ 34 : 19 ] This is what it makes me feel. When I get a hold of this text, my Lord and my God, what you have done, accomplished in the past to save me, and what you will do in the future so astounds me, may I live somehow in the present to please you.

God God will have my father. This text, this text of three tables ought to cause many here this morning to embrace Jesus by faith and in one sense to come home.

And so call many home. Get them home for dinner under the foolishness of this preaching. And may it cause many of us to grab hold of what you want from us.

And continue to encourage us as we make mistakes and learn along the way. Encourage us with that future reality in Jesus name.

Amen. Amen. Thank you.