

The Last Supper

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Preacher: Christopher Rose

- [0 : 0 0] Good afternoon, everyone. Oh, good morning, will we? Still morning, still morning.
- ! I am an associate minister up the road at Chatsworth Baptist Church, and you've had a lot of visitors from our church, and I had to come into the mix and say hello.
- So, hello, church! I do want to say, to all our fathers, grandfathers, great-grandfathers, fathers-in-law, stepfathers, to our natural fathers, our spiritual fathers, to those who are father figures, to those who model the characteristics of fatherhood and been a father to the fatherless, to expectant fathers, future fathers, fathers who have lost children, and to the fathers we have lost.
- We see you, and we say we thank God for you. Happy Father's Day. I am a father. I have three young boys, five, three, and two.
- And oh, how I love fatherhood. I am privileged. I love my children. I always remember the birth.
- [1 : 3 5] Every single one of the births I remember. I was in the room, and it was a crazy experience. I remember being in the room for my first son and hearing so much screaming.
- Fill in the room. So much screaming. You could hear the noise from outside. It was so loud. It was high-pitched as well. And I remember my wife looking lovingly into my eyes and saying, Chris, can you stop screaming, please?
- I'm trying to have a baby. I was so excited. It was great to be a dad. I remember, and I enjoyed watching my son grow and play and learn all the new experiences and understanding what parenthood brings.
- One night, my son kept me up all night. Parents know how this is. I was so tired. It was 5 a.m. I had about 90 minutes sleep the whole night. My eyes are heavy.
- My patience all but gone. But I had to change the nappy. So I was hoping for the quickest and easiest change so I can get back to bed. I took off his nappy.
- [2 : 4 3] I went to wipe him. And boom! He projectile pooped. Everywhere. It was all over my arm. The walls.
- The carpet. All this stuff. Again, I screamed so hard. My wife thought I dropped the baby. I was not impressed.
- I have one more fatherhood story that ends with me screaming. I'm tempted not to say it, but as I'm a guest preacher, please don't judge me. One of my sons started teeming early.
- They always used to just, like, just anything that was there, just bite. And they would just bite on anything. And whether it be my hand or my shoulder, they would just, every now and again, just bite.
- As they got sharper teeth, it became a bit more annoying, as you can imagine. But one day, the baby is asleep on my lap. And I'm laying down. And I'm half asleep.
- [3 : 4 3] And they're laying down just on my lap. And it starts to squirm. And then suddenly, ah! I get bit in a place that I can't mention in church.

And I also screamed. Fatherhood is difficult. It is exciting, but it can be messy.

And it can be painful sometimes. But you see, no matter what, my love for my children is not dampened by any mess. Or the hurt that might come sometimes.

No matter what they do, no matter how much things happens, my love for them is consistent. Nothing can make me love them any less or any more.

They are my children. And if I, as a mere human, can experience love like that, church, how much more does our heavenly Father love us?

[4 : 45] How much more? Despite the mess in our lives. Despite the pain that we sometimes cause him. God is excited to be amongst you.

Amen. So as the scripture has said, this is the Passover meal. Jesus is sitting with his disciples at a Passover meal.

So I know that as a church, you have been exploring the theme, Meals with Jesus. Looking from the perspective of individuals and how their lives has been changed with an encounter and a meal with Jesus.

So today we're exploring the Passover meal. So as most of you know, the Passover was a meal that was shared to commemorate God's deliverance of the children of Israel from slavery in Egypt.

We read about it in Exodus 12. God spares the Israelites from the final plague, which was the death of the firstborn, by passing over the houses that had been marked with the lamb, with the lamb's blood.

[5 : 52] The Passover was a celebration to remember God's faithfulness, his protection, and the beginning of their journey to freedom. So I just want to give you some insights and just to remind us this morning.

The Passover included several elements. First was a lamb that was without blemish. And that was being sacrificed. Two was bread without yeast. Three was bitter herbs, which represented the bitterness of their suffering.

They would eat these together as a meal and drink wine, and they would retell the story to their people. For the disciples, they would have been aware of the cultural significance.

They would have done this all their life. But that day, this meal was unique. Jesus said some things that would have sounded strange to them. It would have been different.

Jesus was showing that all of their traditions pointed to him. He was the lamb without blemish. His body was the bread without yeast, broken and shared for the people.

[7 : 01] The bitter herbs were the representation of sin and suffering, which he had taken on. And his blood, the wine, was the blood that was spilt, that would seal the covenant and protect his people from the judgment of God.

Amen. The Last Supper is a means of grace. Because in this meal, Jesus is two things. He is both the giver and he's the gift.

He's the giver. He says, here's the bread. Here's the wine. But by doing that, he's also sharing himself. He is both the giver and the gift.

Jesus is saying at that moment that as you remembered what I did for Israel, remember the greater thing that I will do for all mankind. For everyone who has ever lived and everyone who will live, I will save them from the stain of sin.

And will bring them back into fellowship. He's saying, remember. Remember. So today, I do want to leave you with three things to remember.

[8 : 16] Now, the first thing. I want you to remember God's desire and passion for fellowship with you. God's desire and passion for fellowship with you.

So just for a moment, I want you to look at this meal from the perspective of the disciples. But actually from the viewpoint of Jesus himself. Verse 14 starts off by saying, I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you.

I have eagerly desired. Jesus, the image of the living God, the creator of the entire universe, is saying, I seek to eat with you.

I desire to be in your presence. Like a father that delights in the company of his children. Our heavenly father wants to spend time with you.

My children are with their grandparents this morning. But you know what? Even though I'm glad to have some quiet in my life every now and again, I eagerly wait to spend time with them again. I can't wait to see them again.

[9 : 35] You talked about Mrs Doubtfire. It's a wonderful movie, but it's a great movie about a father who was, for whatever reason, separated from his children.

And he's doing anything to get back in their lives. So he'll just dress up as someone, dress up as a maid, just to interact with his children. That desire, that burning passion to be with his children is what Jesus is saying here.

I eagerly, I eagerly wait to spend time with you. Amen, saints? So let's not focus on Jesus' power, his miracles, his teaching at this moment.

Just focus on the desire that Jesus has to fellowship with his people. For the disciples, this was tradition. But for Jesus, oh, this meal meant so much more.

There are many people who are insecure about God's love. I'm sure that there are some people in this room that because of whatever situation, you're not fully convinced that you are 100% loved by Jesus.

[10 : 47] Some of us think that God only loves us 70%, 80%. I don't know. But communion reminds us that we are not loved 70%, 80% by God.

We are fully loved by God. I heard a preacher say, imagine if your child, for all the parents in this room, imagine if your child thought you only loved them partly.

You only loved them 50%. How much would that break your heart? That they feel they're only loved by you 50% half the time. We have a God who is a perfect representation of a father.

And he is saying to his church, I love you so much that my body was broken for you, that my blood was spilled just so I can have communion with you. I love you with a deep passion.

Isn't that beautiful? And that's why it didn't matter that Judas or Peter was there. Jesus knew that Judas is going to let him down. But he's still breaking bread.

[11 : 55] He's saying, regardless of what you do, regardless of, I know you're going to let me down. My love for you is constant. And I'm here to show you, I love you 100%.

The creator of the universe is eager, excited to simply be in your presence. I believe that if we all knew the truth of how much we are loved, and when I say know it, I don't mean just know it in our heads.

I mean know it experientially. Like feel it. Fully comprehend it. With our full being, that we are totally loved by God, then we might act differently.

Love differently. We would walk with confidence, not based on pride, but based on an identity that I am a child of God and I am loved by him. Hallelujah.

So that's the first point. God's desire and passion for fellowship. The second point is that, remembering that communion is about embodying community and togetherness.

[12 : 57] It is about unity. Jesus sits on the table, and not only does he give to them, he says to them, share amongst each other. Break and give to one another.

This is showing community. This is showing that we are united in Christ. I've never met you all before. But because of the God we serve, we are brothers and sisters in Christ.

So I feel at home here. Am I at home? Amen. We are united. Paul writes this in Philippians. He says, therefore, in Philippians 2 verse 1 to 4, he says, therefore, if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind, do nothing out of selfish ambition or feigned conceit, rather in humility, value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests, but each of you to the interests of others.

This is what church is, a community. Church, the only way to embody Christ is to do it in community. You cannot just withdraw to an island and pray by yourself, live by yourself, but to really become like Christ, to represent Christ, to grow as Christ, scripture makes it clear that the way to do it is in communion with one another.

N.T. Wright says the following, God's purpose was not just to save individuals, but to create a people, a single family, a renewed humanity, in whom his purpose for the world will be fulfilled.

[14 : 52] We live in a world that celebrates self-reliance and personal achievement, but the gospel calls us into something radically different, church.

Belonging. We belong to one another. When we say yes to Jesus, we are not just saved from something, we are saved into something, and that is the body of Christ.

So don't try to be freelancers. We are members. Not just attendees. We are united. We are the church. Amen?

And the third point, we're meant to remember the effects of sin and death. Remember the effects of sin and the sacrifice needed.

From the very beginning, Satan twisted the truth, making God's authority seem like something negative. But since then, humanity has believed that true freedom comes from living without God.

[15 : 55] We have allowed sin to separate us from God. But instead, that path leads to bondage. The coming of God's kingdom is truly good news because it is a kingdom marked by justice, peace, joy, freedom.

This is the heart of the gospel. Basically, remember the gospel. I try to get in the habit of trying to articulate the gospel in a way that I can just say it to someone if they're asked under pressure.

Not all the time people want to hear me give a sermon. So I have to be able to say it. We must remember the gospel message and the sacrifice that was needed. The reason, church, that we hate sin is because it separates us from God's presence.

We can never be separated from God's love. It says that we can never be separated from God's love. But sin makes us separate from his presence. God hates sin and pride because it comes between him spending time with his children.

He hates it. And so we must share the simplicity of the gospel message that we should remember, proclaim, and share to everyone. And it is this, that God, the creator of the entire universe, loves us all with a deep passion and wants to spend eternity with us.

[17 : 19] So much so that he lived the life we should have lived and died the death we should have died. so that whoever calls on his name will be saved.

I want to say that again. God, the creator of the entire universe, loves us all with a deep passion and wants to spend eternity with us.

So much that he lived the life we should have lived and died the death we should have died. So whoever calls on his name will be saved.

Hallelujah! Hallelujah! This is the gospel. So no longer do we just remember just because this was a Passover meal, this tradition.

When we take communion, when we did take communion today, it's not just a tradition that we do it every two months, every two times a month. No. This is something so much more.

[18 : 27] God is in this room and he wants to be in communion with us and that is fantastic. That is exciting and that gives us a reason to praise.

Before we close, I do want to say this though. I want to just share the importance of remembering because as the scripture says, do this in remembrance of me.

Why is he emphasising that? Why is it important to remember? I'll go to church every Sunday. It's all good. I will get there, Lord. But he's specifically saying, remember. And the reason why I believe this is important is because we have entered the age of misinformation today.

this is the rise of AI. I have seen videos of people preaching and a whole church behind them and then I've seen another clip and it's the same message and then another clip and it's the same message with another person and it's all fake.

fake. And it's not realistic. I would think, oh, okay, that's what the church is preaching. It's fake. People are typing in things. People with no faith necessarily, they just want to write certain things and they type it and then the video comes up.

[19 : 42] We need to be more discerning and in an age and in a time where things are going to be coming up and going to try and deceive us, we have to remember the truth that we stand upon. Remember the truth of the gospel.

people, we cannot be deceived. They can do things where they can take my picture and make my mouth move and even make your voice sound like yourself so that it sounds like it's me speaking but it's not.

And so we must be able to come together often so that we can remember the truth. The devil is called the father of lies.

When I was young I used to think that that term was not strong enough for the devil. Father of death sounded more appropriate or father of evil or like we said in your interview Darth Vader. That's more of a menacing name than the father of lies.

But as I grow up I realise that there is a single lie that the devil tells that is so deadly. A single lie. It's more deadly than any weapon or disease, more devastating to communities and families than any natural disaster, more dangerous than any war and that lie is simply this.

[20 : 56] God does not love you. It comes in very different variations. God doesn't love you fully. God loves you sometimes.

God loves you but only when you da da da da da. These are all lies. I want everyone to leave here with an overwhelming feeling that God loves me more than I can imagine, more than I can realise.

Do not let any person or experience any situation make you forget or doubt just how much the father loves you. There is no condition to his love, no work needed for his love because God's very nature is love.

Let's pray. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Thank you, Jesus. Heavenly Father, thank you for revealing your deep desire for fellowship with us.

It's so great that you sent your son to share not just a meal but his very life. As we reflect on the Last Supper, help us to embody the kind of community that Jesus modelled, one of humility, of unity and love.

[22 : 17] Forgive us for the times that sin has separated us from you and also from one another. And we thank you for the sacrifice that bridges that divide.

May the power of the gospel continue to shape us into a people who will live in grace, walk in truth and share your table with open hearts.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. deth deth Thank you.