

Lesson 10 31 December 2017

The Last Supper

Lesson Scope: [Luke 22:1-38](#)

References in brackets pertain to Luke 22 unless otherwise noted

Lesson Focus

Many pilgrims had come to Jerusalem for the Passover feast. This gave Jesus ample opportunity to teach and minister to the crowds. The Jewish rulers though were disturbed by His teachings and sought for a chance to get rid of Him. They received an unexpected breakthrough in their quest from one of Jesus' own disciples, Judas Iscariot, who promised to betray Jesus for a fee.

Jesus was reaching the climax of His earthly ministry. He chose to spend the Passover feast in private with His twelve disciples. Along with the observance of the Passover, He instituted the ordinances of Communion and Feet Washing. He also taught the disciples on various subjects. He revealed that one of them would betray Him, warned Peter that his overconfidence would lead to denial, reproved all the disciples for lack of humility, and attempted to prepare them for the great shock they would face in the next few days. He also comforted them with various promises (John 14).

To most Jews, this Passover was just another of nearly fifteen hundred that had occurred since the Israelites fled Egypt. But to Jesus and His followers, this Passover marked an end of an era. By Jesus' death on the cross, He provided man with the perfect sacrifice for sin, thus negating any further need to observe the Passover and offer the yearly sacrificial lamb of atonement. Thus Jesus instituted the Communion ordinance as a reminder to His followers of His suffering for the redemption of sin and the fulfillment of the Old Covenant with the establishment of the New Covenant. This lesson should inspire a greater appreciation for the Communion ordinance and the sacrifice it represents also the importance of humility and service within a community of believers by studying Jesus' teachings and example. Jesus was teaching and ministering in the shadow of the cross. In the face of this impending crisis Jesus instituted the Communion ordinance.

Lesson Aim: To observe Jesus' example as He instituted the Lord's Supper.

Theme Verse: [Luke 22:19](#). And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

Lesson Text

"I Have Desired ... This Passover"

[Luke 22:7-8](#) Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed. ⁸And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat.

[Luke 22:14-16](#) And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. ¹⁵And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: ¹⁶For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

"This Do in Remembrance of Me"

[Luke 22:17-23](#) And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves: ¹⁸For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. ¹⁹And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. ²⁰Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. ²¹But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me *is* with me on the table. ²²And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed! ²³And they began to enquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.

"I Am ... He That Serveth"

[Luke 22:24-30](#) And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. ²⁵And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. ²⁶But ye *shall not be* so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. ²⁷For whether *is* greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? *is* not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he

that serveth. ²⁸Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. ²⁹And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; ³⁰That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

"I Have Prayed for Thee"

Luke 22:31-38 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired *to have* you, that he may sift *you* as wheat: ³²But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. ³³And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. ³⁴And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me. ³⁵And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. ³⁶Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take *it*, and likewise *his* scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. ³⁷For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end. ³⁸And they said, Lord, behold, here *are* two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

Questions for Study

"I Have Desired ... This Passover"

1. Why may Jesus have wanted to observe this Passover with great desire?
2. How should we prepare to observe Communion?

"This Do in Remembrance of Me"

3. How did the Passover symbolize Christ's sacrifice on the cross?
4. What do the emblems of Communion represent? What testimony do we give when we partake of Communion?

"I Am ... He That Serveth"

5. How did Jesus' life exemplify His teachings regarding service?
6. How is the desire for position incompatible with the ordinance of Communion?
7. What are some Scriptural promises for those who humbly serve?

"I Have Prayed for Thee"

8. What did Jesus tell Peter to do? How did Peter's life fulfill this?
9. What are some practical effects of accepting Christ's atonement?

Analyzing the Passage

"With desire I have desired" (22:15) is a Hebrew form of expression meaning "to greatly desire." As Jesus' earthly life was coming to an end and as He saw forward to the suffering He would endure, it seems He wanted to observe this last Passover with those closest to Him. He could also be referring to the fact that this Passover was the last one they would need to observe as Jesus Himself was the perfect Lamb needed to provide redemption.

Along with the observance of Passover, Jesus instituted the ordinance of Communion, which is the observance of the New Covenant, sealed with Christ's blood (22:16-20).

Jesus taught the disciples that to follow Him was to serve others (22:24-27). The act of washing the disciples' feet and the command to do likewise clearly illustrated what Jesus meant, as only slaves would wash the feet of guests in those days. Jesus also assured them that their faithful service would not go unrewarded (22:29, 30).

Jesus was not condoning resistance by asking them to arm with swords (22:35-38). He was stressing the perils they would face and mustering their courage for the crisis ahead of them.

Principles and Applications

"I Have Desired ... This Passover"

1. Christ displayed an earnest desire for spiritual things (22:7, 15). Just as all devout Jews were preparing to observe the Passover, Jesus, along with His disciples, also carefully prepared and observed this one last Passover. He knew full well that before this Passover was complete, He would suffer as the Lamb of God that would provide redemption to the whole world. As a sinless person, He did not need to observe the Passover as a reminder of deliverance from bondage. Instead, He used this as an opportunity to teach and warn the disciples. His institution of Communion marked a transition between the Old and the New Covenant.

"This Do in Remembrance of Me"

2. The Communion ordinance is a reminder of Christ's sacrifice to provide salvation (22:19-20). Jesus suffered greatly and gave His own life to redeem the lost. The emblems of Communion represent His shed blood and broken body. All who partake of the emblems of Communion

testify that the provision for their redemption is still sufficient, and that they are accepting the gift of redemption.

3. Christ's better covenant is the source of new life for those who receive it (22:20). All the blood of animals sacrificed on Jewish altars only covered the sins of those offering the sacrifice. These sacrifices had to be continually offered to satisfy the demands of a just and holy God. However, the "new testament" involved the sacrifice of Jesus as the perfect Lamb, whose shed blood would take away the sins of the world, giving life to all who accept this gift.

4. Loyalty to Christ is essential for entering into a covenant with Him (22:21-22). "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32-33). Judas betrayed Jesus because of greed. Peter denied Christ because of fear. Standing for Christ no matter what the cost takes courage and is unpopular in our society. Yet it is the only way we can enter into a relationship with Him.

"I Am ... He That Serveth"

5. Though foreign to human nature, humility is imperative for those who follow Christ (22:25-26). The self-interest displayed by our society runs counter to what Jesus taught. Jesus often pronounced condemnation against the Pharisees for their desire for position and prestige. Pride is at the heart of self-promotion and self-commendation. The humble will be willing to do the unnoticed, are content with less than the best, and desire to serve and promote others and, ultimately, Christ.

6. Jesus exemplified acceptable service and dedication to others (22:27). He instituted the ordinance of Feet Washing following the Lord's Supper (John 13). The act of stooping and washing the disciples' feet demonstrated how Christ lived. He came to serve, lived to serve, and finally died to serve the needs of mankind. Practicing this ordinance should remind us to live for and serve each other as Christ did.

7. Christ's followers are distinguished by their unity (22:26-27). In many religions and organizations, there are clear class distinctions or castes between the various levels. What makes Christianity unique is the equality of everyone within the brotherhood. The love and forbearance displayed among the saints often amazes onlookers and should give us opportunity to explain why. Sadly though, when friction, com-

petitiveness, or intolerance flares up within a brotherhood, it gives the world opportunity to blaspheme and mock.

"I Have Prayed for Thee"

8. In spite of His own future, Christ sought the welfare of others (22:31, 32). Jesus was within a few hours of facing extreme agony in the Garden and would face a torturous trial and gruesome death within a day. Yet He took time to reprove His disciples for their shortcomings, to allay their fears, and to warn them of the trials they would face. The needs of others were more important to Him than His own life. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13).

Important Teachings

1. Christ displayed an earnest desire for spiritual things (22:7, 15).
2. The Communion ordinance is a reminder of Christ's sacrifice to provide salvation (22:19-20).
3. Christ's better covenant is the source of new life for those who receive it (22:20).
4. Loyalty to Christ is essential for entering into a covenant with Him (22:21-22).
5. Though foreign to human nature, humility is imperative for those who follow Christ (22:25-26).
6. Jesus exemplified acceptable service and dedication to others (22:27).
7. Christ's followers are distinguished by their unity (22:26-27).
8. In spite of His own future, Christ sought the welfare of others (22:31-32).

Answers to Questions

1. Why may Jesus have wanted to observe this Passover with great desire?

Jesus knew that this was the last Passover that needed to be observed. His suffering and death would fulfill the typology of the Passover, and the institution of Communion signified the beginning of a new covenant with Christ and the church. By His teachings and actions at the Last Supper, He revealed His desire for fellowship with His disciples one last time to teach, admonish, warn, and comfort them before His suffering.

2. How should we prepare to observe Communion?

The Passover required careful preparation before the feast. Communion also requires us to look inward and evaluate our lives so that we may be found worthy of receiving the emblems (1 Corinthians 11:23-27). Since Communion is an act of the community of believers, our brotherhood relationships must also be evaluated.

3. How did the Passover symbolize Christ's sacrifice on the cross?

The Passover lamb was to be without blemish; Christ was sinless. The blood of the lamb was to be applied to the doorposts so the household would be spared the judgment of the Lord; Jesus' blood cleanses the sinner and delivers him from the judgment of sin.

4. What do the emblems of Communion represent? What testimony do we give when we partake of Communion?

The broken bread represents the broken body of Christ as He suffered to provide redemption. The cup represents the shed blood that cleanses us from sin. By participating in the Communion service, we indicate that we have examined our lives and are right with God. We profess our faith in the work of Christ in providing salvation. We dedicate our lives to Christ for His work and indicate our willingness to surrender to His will. We express anticipation of a time when we can share the feast anew in Christ's presence in heaven (Matthew 26:29).

5. How did Jesus' life exemplify His teachings regarding service?

Many times in His earthly ministry, Jesus expended Himself in serving the needs of others around Him before His own physical needs. The very act of the Incarnation demonstrated His willingness to leave His heavenly home and come to a dark, sin-cursed world to redeem it. At the Last Supper, His interest in the needs of His disciples preceding His suffering and death illustrated the greater love He had for others over His own life. The act of washing the disciples' feet also exemplifies humility that should accompany service.

6. How is the desire for position incompatible with the ordinance of Communion?

The desire for position indicates a proud and covetous heart, which can have no place in our lives. To share in the emblems, we acknowledge the adequacy of Christ's sacrifice for providing redemption for all men. No one can feel superior or desire a greater position when we were all equally lost in sin, we have all been equally bought with the blood of

Christ, and we are all equally sons and daughters of God.

7. What are some Scriptural promises for those who humbly serve?

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (James 4:10). "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days" (Ecclesiastes 11:1). "His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Matthew 25:21). Jesus promised the disciples that their faithful service would be rewarded in His coming kingdom (Luke 22:29-30).

8. What did Jesus tell Peter to do? How did Peter's life fulfill this?

Jesus told Peter to strengthen the brethren after his conversion.

Just as Jesus said, Peter repented of his failure and became a strong force in the early church in leading and encouraging others. His epistles speak to us yet today.

9. What are some practical effects of accepting Christ's atonement?

The work of redemption in the life of a believer means a change in direction. Paul said to put off the old man and put on the new man. Our daily life should exemplify to the world that the works of darkness can be vanquished. Our words and actions should be a testimony to the unbeliever of Christ's great provision for man. Accepting Christ's atonement also means accepting the suffering and persecution that Satan brings against the people of God.

Summarizing the Lesson

"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord" (1 Corinthians 11:23-27).

Research Guide

1. Exodus 12 describes the preparation of the Passover.
2. More teaching regarding the observing of the Communion ordinance is found in 1 Corinthians 11.
3. Read Doctrines of the Bible, pages 395-403.