

1. Jesus Rejoices to Fellowship With His Disciples
 - a. Jesus prepared for this moment by delegating tasks specifically
 - i. He gave Peter and John, two of His closest companions, instructions
 - ii. He showed foreknowledge, or pre-arrangement
 1. He knew of a servant carrying water, the large upper room, the master of the house would accept his reasoning
 2. This secrecy may have been to keep Judas guessing until the meal and subsequent teaching was completed
 - b. They followed His weird command
 - i. Prepared the Passover meal
 1. The meal was instituted to remember *and* celebrate God’s rescue of Israel from their slavery in Egypt
 - a. Bitter herbs represent the suffering of slavery
 - b. Saltwater represents the tears of their oppression
 - c. The unleavened bread represented the expediency with which they were rescued
 - d. **The Lamb represented the lamb’s blood which was placed on the doorposts of believing ones’ homes which led the Destroying Angel to “pass over” that house as He judged Egypt by killing the firstborn son of those whose homes didn’t have blood on the doorposts**
 - e. Though not instituted in the OT, the cups of wine were used according to the Mishnah, indicating celebration, joy of redemption
 2. Thus, the Exodus, and the **redemption of God’s sovereign hand was the background** of this meal
 - ii. Peter and John would had to purchase and prepare these things, including getting the Passover Lamb from the Temple where they were slaughtered
 1. Note that Jesus is avoiding the public places for now
 2. One also wonders what Peter and John were thinking and discussing during this ordeal
 - a. I can imagine, based upon their later discussion around the Table...
 - c. He “**eagerly desired**” to eat the Passover with them
 - i. This phrase is a strong Hebraic way of stating great desire
 1. “**with desire I have desired...**”
 2. Judas was there, too
 - ii. It is clear how greatly Jesus loves His disciples, even knowing that His suffering and death are at hand, His thoughts are of them and for their joy together
 1. **John uses the phrase, “He loved them to the end” (John 13:1)**
 2. How greatly does He love?! He delights to fellowship together with you!
2. The Lord’s Supper (Passover) is About God’s Covenant to Redeem and Bind His People to Himself in Jesus
 - a. Jesus reclined and the apostles “with him”
 - i. This is the preeminent phrase regarding the Lord’s Supper
 - ii. **The institution of the Lord’s Supper is not merely about factual recognition, though it is at least that, but rather pertains to our union with Him in His death**
 - b. Jesus speaks of “fulfilling” the Passover meal

- i. This the root of the "with him" in v14 and "with you" in v15
- ii. He is the Lamb *with whom we identify*
 - 1. It is this identification that was initiated in the OT ritual, and is fulfilled in the NT by the sacrifice of Jesus Himself
 - 2. We identify with the substance to which the shadow of the OT ritual points: Christ, the Paschal Lamb
 - 3. Thus, as He died for our sins, so we died to our sin, its power, and its penalty
 - a. He bears the curse for our sin, death, and we died and have paid it down
"with Him"
- c. Jesus emphasizes the distribution of his joy among the disciples by the symbol of wine distributed
 - i. "I have spoken these things that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be full" (Upper Room discourse, John 15:11)
 - ii. This distribution among them of this first cup also emphasizes the unity of the church, His body
 - iii. It is also true that the celebration that resulted from this redemption would not be celebrated together with Jesus until He returns again
 - 1. Thus, there is a future covenant action promised of His return *to fellowship with us and celebrate with a meal*
 - 2. PARTY at His return!
- d. Jesus reveals how the Passover is fulfilled in Him, how his disciples are "with him", and how they are filled with His joy: KEY WORD - *KOINONIA* - FELLOWSHIP/PARTICIPANTS
 - i. Bread - This is my body, which is given for you
 - 1. Do this in remembrance of Me.
 - a. Remembrance is more than mere mental recollection, but it is recollection of action with action
 - i. Genesis 9:12-16, God will "remember" His covenant, i.e. act according to it
 - ii. To remember, particularly in the context of covenanting, which is what Jesus is doing here, is to act upon the covenant made
 - b. This Supper is about His promise, His covenant, His promising to "all that the Lord has spoken I will do" (cf. Ex 24:7, Mosaic Covenant)
 - i. You see, it is not that Christ's blood ratified our covenant with God, but it ratified God's covenant with us!
 - ii. It is not about our giving, but Christ's giving
 - 1. "which is given for you"
 - 2. It is a foretaste of the heavenly banquet whereby God will give Himself to His people in such glorious display we will rejoice to bow in worship, sing of His great glory, and proclaim His greatness in awestruck wonder
 - c. Thus, this is strong covenant language: "I will be your God and you will be my people" *through the broken body and poured out blood of Jesus Christ*
 - i. The suffering and death of Jesus are the ratification of God's covenant to redeem, that He *has* redeemed those who entrust themselves to Him by faith in His Word
 - ii. Just as the people of Israel in Egypt had to believe the Word of God and place the blood of the Paschal Lamb upon the doorposts of their homes, so also those who believe the gospel by placing the blood of

Jesus as their covering, their only covering, find rescue from the
destroyer's whetted blade

- ii. Wine - This the cup of the new covenant in my blood, poured out for you
 - 1. This would have been the third cup of the Passover meal (there were four), significant **because it was traditionally the "cup of redemption"**
 - a. **Jesus is showing that Israel's redemption from Egypt was just a foreshadowing of a greater redemption from sin**
 - b. Jesus takes this symbol and self-interprets it: It commemorates not the past **redemption through a lamb's blood put upon the doorpost, but of His blood as the means by which God's judgment passes over all who have entered through Him**
 - 2. Both bread and wine have a "for you" aspect
 - a. body given for you
 - i. Given, not taken
 - b. blood poured out for you
 - i. death on our behalf
 - 3. This is the vicarious work of the suffering and death of Jesus Christ: His death in our place, taking our judgment and bearing the wrath of God on our behalf
 - a. As a vicarious Adam, He passed the test of perfect obedience, entrusting Himself completely to the Father and His Word
 - b. As a vicarious High Priest, He offered up the sacrifice for our sins
 - c. As a vicarious Lamb, He is the sacrifice for our sins
 - d. As a vicarious Champion, He defeated death and ushers in the Kingdom of God and the pouring out of His Spirit to His people
- iii. The Lord's Supper is the holy remembrance of **Jesus' death AND our participation in it**
 - 1. See 1 Cor 10:15-18 - "Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing [*koinonia*] in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a *sharing* in the body of Christ?"
 - a. Thus, it is more than a mere memorial, it is a spiritual and covenantal remembrance of our union with Jesus in His death "for us" and of our death "with Him", it is a participation, a fellowship with Christ and with His death.
 - b. Thus, we remember that we died to self-autonomy, to sin, to self-rule and thus are no longer under its curses
 - i. No longer are we ruling ourselves, or under the spell of the deception that we rule ourselves
 - ii. We belong to God (1 Cor 3:23) and are fools to the world.
 - 2. Therefore, our participation at the Lord's Table, remembering *and proclaiming* (for this act is primarily a proclamation, 1 Cor 11:26) His death and our union with Him, is an act that is not taken lightly, nor can be truly joined by an unbeliever, though they could mentally recall the facts of Jesus' death, they cannot unite to Him as dead to themselves and to the world.
 - a. An unbeliever is not bound to Christ, unified with Him, nor has died with Him to sin or self-rule, thus we "cannot partake of the table of the Lord and of demons"
 - b. A believer who takes this act of spiritual union lightly at the Lord's Table may be disciplined by the Lord, even by death itself (1 Cor 11:23-32)

- c. Therefore, we are to “examine ourselves”, not to see if we are “good enough”, but to make sure that we are appreciating the severity and majesty of the death of Christ and of our participation in it.
 - i. We must not “normalize” this sacred rite by bringing down so low as to minimize its import nor to diminish the referents to which its symbols point: participation in his body and blood.
 - ii. Grape juice or wine is not the point, for both are adequate sacred symbols of the vine which portray his death mixed with joy.
 - iii. French bread or matzo is not point, for both show the unity of one loaf and brokenness of his body as our food and sustenance.
 - iv. But Coke and a hot dog? Have we not approached the holy with too little trepidation and consorted, rather, to emphasize the communal act rather than the participation in his death which the bread and wine bring in spiritual communion with Him? Methinks so.
- 3. What, then, as we approach the table, does this participation in His death mean to you? What is its significance?
 - a. “I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. The life which I now live I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself up for me.” (Galatians 2:20)
 - i. Rom 8:1-4 – there is no more condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus – the righteous requirement of the law has been fulfilled in you
 - b. “You have died to sin, how shall we still live in it?”(Rom 6:1-11) – “Be holy as I am holy”(1 Peter 1:15-16) because in your union with Him God makes you holy (Eph 5:27), for He “gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. (Titus 2:14)
 - c. “For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; ¹⁵ and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised. (2Co 5:14-15)

Conclusion:

This is the remembrance that we are called to at this table. He has proclaimed, enacted, and ratified His **covenant with us in His own blood...you are participants in his work by faith in Him, unified with Him**, so that as He died, you died, and as He lives, you live, not because you are pure but because He is pure, not because you have kept the covenant, but because He has kept the covenant. Thus, this table is dressed for sinners who desire redemption and find it in this self-giving God, according to the love of the Father and the sending of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in power of His Holy Spirit. And our remembrance is that this glorious truth is effective and changes everything for those who close to Christ for mercy. You see, it is not more resolutions that we need, but just solution, one solution, and we have seen the glory of God full of grace and truth in the face of Jesus, the solution for our depravity and brokenness. Let us not merely remember the facts of His death and resurrection, but let the texture of this bread remind you of His provision, His life and death and life as the food of our souls. Let us affectionately, thankfully, glorify the greatness of His grace and the immensity of His gracious gift impress upon our hearts the glorious truth that God accepts sinners at this table because Jesus paid down our debts against God and His creation, and in Him there is true freedom for the desperate, weak, downtrodden, broken-hearted rebels. And let the taste of this fruit of the vine fill your hearts with joy that the fourth cup of celebration is yet to come: He is coming again to make all things new and to drink with us again in the Kingdom of God.