Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

The New Passover
Scripture: Mark 14:17-26
Code: 41-73

Well let's turn to the Word of God in Mark 14. We need to be on the fast track in Mark, as you know. And you're probably aware that next Sunday is Easter Sunday and there is no way we are going to be at the resurrection by next Sunday. So that will be a few weeks after that. So we're going to have an Easter Sunday celebration next week but the message is going to be on our Lord's experiencing Gethsemane, in Gethsemane. We will celebrate the resurrection but we'll stay with the chronology as we flow through the gospel of Mark. These are wonderful days for us. We are covering a lot at a rapid pace, but I think it's a wonderful way to experience these last hours of our Lord's earthly live.

I want to draw you to chapter 14 of Mark and verses 17 through 26…Mark 14:17, "When it was evening, He came with the Twelve. As they were reclining at the table and eating, Jesus said, 'Truly I say to you, one of you will betray Me, one who is eating with Me.' They began to be grieved and to say to Him one by one, 'Surely not I.' And He said to them, 'It is one of the Twelve, one who dips with Me in the bowl, for the Son of Man is to go just as it is written of Him. But woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed, it would have been good for that man if he had not been born.' While they were eating, He took some bread and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to them and said, 'Take it, this is My body.' And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them and they all drank from it. And He said to them, 'This is My blood of the Covenant which is poured out for many. Truly I say to you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the Kingdom of God.' After singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives."

This takes place, as you know, on Thursday night of Passion Week. It is in the Jewish calendar the fourteenth of Nisan, year 30 A.D. And on that Thursday night is the Passover celebration for all of the Galilean Jews. In the Galilee, they celebrated their Passover on Thursday because they mark the Passover day from sunrise to sunrise. The Judean Jews in the south celebrated their Passover on Friday because they marked the Passover day from sunset to sunset. This difference we know from the writings of the Jewish Mishnah which are the official documents concerning the conduct of the Jews, and also from the history of Josephus. That's important because that allowed our Lord to celebrate the Passover on Thursday night for a lot of critical reasons and still be the Passover on Friday, because they were two authorized and legitimate celebrations.

This Passover is monumental. For 1500 years since the Exodus, Passover has been celebrated at that time of year by the Jews without a break. This is the last Passover. This is the final legitimate Passover. This marks the end of the Old and the beginning of the New. It is not only the last

Passover, it is the first communion. Our Lord Himself makes the transition, taking the components of the last Passover and redefining them as the elements of His table. The Old Testament is over and the New Testament has come.

Now it is essential that our Lord be the Passover on Friday and die at three o'clock at exactly the time the Judeans were slaughtering the lambs for their Passover, for He is the Passover Lamb and God made the timing perfect because Jesus died exactly at that time on Friday. But it also is crucial that He celebrate the Passover and thus this tradition of one on Thursday and one on Friday fits perfectly in to the purpose and plan of God who is in control, after all, of all of history. The Lord needs to celebrate this final Passover because it is commanded to do that and that allows Him again, as always, to fulfill all righteousness. He also needs to celebrate it in order that He might define it as the end and that He might inaugurate the new memorial that we call Communion and make the transition. It is also critical that He have time, prolonged time, from the very beginning of evening till after midnight to instruct His disciples. And all of that instruction is contained in John chapter 13 through chapter 16. It is a crucial area of biblical instruction and it is capped off by the great High Priestly prayer of our Lord recorded in John 17.

Within that there are promises about the future, as well as a listing of all the necessary resources for their survival in what was to come. The main promise that our Lord gave them during those hours was the promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit. It also provided an opportunity for Him on His schedule, on His timing when He wanted it done to initiate the action of Judas, to bring about his death right on God's schedule, a crucial Thursday evening then.

Now having said that those are the components of that evening, we don't know all of the chronological sequence with any precision. It really isn't that important to know what followed what. It only matters that we know what happened. All of these things that are important are laid out for us by the four gospel writers who write about Thursday night and collectively we get the full picture, if not in any kind of order. What happened is critical, the sequence is not.

The lamb for the sacrifice was chosen on Monday and God chose His Lamb on Monday and as the rest brought their lambs into the city on Monday, so our Lord came into the city of Jerusalem as God's chosen Lamb on the day the lambs were chosen. The lambs would then be killed either on Thursday or Friday, whether you were a Galilean or a Judean determined that. They would be killed by the priests and then eaten by those who brought their lamb. This Lamb, however, was not killed by the priests, the true Lamb of God would be killed by God Himself. It pleased the Lord to do that.

Passover was a very simple memorial. It looked back to the Exodus in Egypt. The final plague, you remember in the book of Exodus, was the slaying of the firstborn in every family. And the only way that you could avoid the angel of death coming by and killing the firstborn was to sacrifice the lamb and spread the blood of that lamb on the cross piece and the side pieces, the wooden pieces of the

door. And where the angel of death saw that, he passed by, hence-Passover.

What that said was that protection from the judgment of God, deliverance from the wrath of God requires death and requires, listen, the death of an innocent substitute. That's what the sacrificial system communicated. Very simple, that deliverance from sin's judgment, from divine wrath can be provided by the death of an innocent substitute. The lamb was innocent from an iniquitous viewpoint. But no lamb ever satisfied God. That is why millions of them had been slaughtered through those fifteen hundred years. But now, this would be the last legitimate Passover because the next day the one who was the true Passover Lamb, 1 Corinthians 5:7, Christ our Passover, would be slain. And the reality would come, the substance would come and the symbols and the shadows would cease. The slaughter of these lambs had gone on for centuries, but now only one more day. At exactly the hour of slaughter on Friday afternoon, the true Lamb would die, the veil in the temple would be ripped from top to bottom, and the system of sacrifice, the Levitical system would come to its final end. And it would be ended not by Judas and not by Herod and not by Caiaphas and not by the Jewish leaders at the Sanhedrin and not by the Romans, it would be ended by God who offered up His own Son as the perfect sacrifice.

And now again, it's Thursday evening. Peter and John have gone to make preparations. The disciples as Thursday began, you remember, said, "Where are we going to have the Passover? There's thirteen of us, where are we going to have the Passover?" And remember now, they were Galileans who had an iterant ministry not only all over Galilee but in the last year of our Lord's ministry, in Judea and they had to stay with somebody. Our Lord even said, "The foxes have holes, the birds have nests, the Son of Man has not where to lay His head." They had been staying that week in the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus. But the question is, where are we going to hold the Passover?

And the Lord answers the question by sending Peter and John, Luke tells us that in Luke 22:8, to find a man carrying a water jar and follow him and the Lord had obviously set it up. And he will take you to the place. They went to the place, Peter and John, and never left. So when Thursday evening comes, the other ten and the Lord head toward an unknown place. Why the secret? Judas, that's why. Our Lord knew what Judas was plotting. He knew what he was planning. And He knew that it would have been a perfect place for Him to be taken by the temple police under the leadership of the Sanhedrin if He was in a room at night, the streets were empty, the place was pitch dark, it wouldn't be in public view and if they knew He was going to be there, He would be defenseless and they would come and take Him. And in order to prevent Judas from having the opportunity to know where the place was and go tell the leaders of Israel, He made sure they never knew until they arrived there and then Judas couldn't leave or he would have been exposed. He would leave, but he wouldn't leave until the Lord commissioned him to leave so that everything would happen on the Lord's timetable and not that of Judas or the Jewish leaders.

So eventually, they all arrive. And that's what we see in verse 17. It was evening of that Thursday and He came with the Twelve. He actually came technically with ten, the other two remaining there and they were all together. And again, we don't have a fixed chronology, but this evening then begins…when evening begins at the setting of the sun, and runs past midnight. It is a long meal. Into that evening, the four gospels fit the following components…the Passover meal itself, the exposure of Judas, the action of Satan, the confrontation of Peter about his denial, the discussion among the Apostles about who of them will be the greatest, the unparalleled act of washing their feet, the teaching of John 13 to 16 which includes the promise of the Holy Spirit and persecution, and all other resources that will be made available to them, the prayer of Jesus in John 17, and some other warnings to the Apostles. All of that occurs and is woven and around the events that go on many hours at the Passover. Again, the components are crucial, the sequence is not.

Let's just break it up into two parts: the final Passover and the First Communion, okay? Let's look at the final Passover, verse 17.

Sunset officially starts Passover traditionally. The lambs have been slain. Prior to that, the place has been set. It is unknown to us. I know there's a traditional place in the city of Jerusalem where they say the Lord had His last Passover, but that is purely a traditional place. There is nothing in the New Testament that indicates where it was. And that makes sense if you're trying to keep it a secret at that time, and maybe the disciples didn't even know whose it was when they were there. We don't know for sure what they knew, but we know that we don't have any information about it. It had to be secret, absolutely secret in order for our Lord to accomplish what He wanted to accomplish, so that Judas couldn't tell them who wanted Him dead and He'd be arrested so that He had no interruptions but He had the full time to go through all the things that needed to be accomplished that night, all that incredibly critical teaching contained in John 13 to 16 and even at some point including His great High Priestly prayer of John 17. Now this night is a monumental transition. I can't emphasize that too much. The Old is gone, the New has come.

In verse 17 we pick it up that He came with the Twelve and as they were reclining at the table and eating…stop there just long enough to say, this is not a quick lunch. This is not a fast meal. They recline. And when they wanted a prolonged meal, that's what they did. Their heads would be at the table, their feet reclining away from the table. They didn't put their feet under the table, as we do. We sit in a chair, put our feet under the table. They were on some kind of a reclining couch of some nature with feet away from the table and their heads toward the table. This is what they did when they had a prolonged experience at a meal.

Originally, however, if you go back to the Exodus, do you remember the instruction? The instruction of God was this, "Eat with your loins girded," that is with your belt on, all the loose ends pulled together. "Your shoes on, your staff in your hand, standing up in a hurry." And they were to do that and traditionally did that for some years because they were remembering the hurried reality of the

Exodus. That custom had changed. That tradition had changed. And Passover became a more languid experience.

The reclining would give the opportunity for our Lord to accomplish everything that He wanted to accomplish. Now Josephus, the historian, tells us that no less than ten men and no more than 20 would eat a Passover lamb. So they would have picked out their lamb, it had gone to the temple, been killed by the priest, offered on the altar. Some of the meat kept, some of the meat burned, and the rest taken by the disciples back to the Passover place and there they were ready to eat it. According to Exodus 12:43 to 46, they had to eat all of it. And so they would have spent the evening, the appropriate number of men, eleven of them, plus Judas, plus Jesus, within the bounds of ten to twenty, and they would have enjoyed that Passover meal.

Now let me give you an idea of what went on at a Passover and what you have to understand is this is a series of things, a sequence of things at Passover in and around which were woven the other elements that we know to be occurring on this night.

First it began with a prayer of thanks and it was followed by the first cup of red wine, doubly diluted with water… the first cup of red wine, doubly diluted with water. After that first cup, which kind of launches it, there was a ceremonial and an actual washing of hands. They actually washed their hands because they ate with their hands and there was a ceremonial significance to it because it symbolized a need for cleansing and a need for holiness.

So the opening cup and then the cleansing after the prayer of thanks. It seems to me that this might be a good place to assume that while they were talking about the need for cleansing, while they were talking about their unholiness, maybe that is where the Lord pointed out a problem with them because Luke 22:24 says, “A dispute arose among them as to which of them was regarded to be the greatest.” Same ole, same ole, right? It is very likely that at that time as they’re just getting beginning into this and the issue becomes a heart holiness that our Lord confronts that arguing about who is going to be the greatest, that ugly pride, by doing what John 13 says He did. “Jesus rose from supper, laid aside His garments, taking a towel, began to wash the disciples feet. And He gave them a profound lesson on…what?...humility.”

It had to be juxtaposed against their arguing about which of them was the greatest and such an open manifestation of pride. And then He said to them, “I’ve given you an example for you to do as I have done for you.” And then He even said to them, as recorded in Luke 22:25 and 26, “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them.” That’s what Gentiles do. “But not so with you.” He went on to say the greatest of you become as the least, as the servant, the slave. So just getting in to the Passover and they’re already demonstrating their sinfulness, the symbol of the washing would have been a perfect time for them to confront that sinfulness. Our Lord perhaps does that at that interval and then washes their feet to give them a lesson on humility.

This was followed then, this washing, by the eating of bitter herbs. This is when the bread would be broken. It would be flat bread, not a big fat loaf, flat bread broken and distributed and then dipped into a paste made from fruit and nuts. And then after that, that would be first course, kind of, they would sing the Hallel. The Hallel, from which we get the word Hallelujah, are series of hymns that praise God from Psalm 113 to Psalm 118. And they sang them all at the Passover. Traditionally they would sing Psalm 113 and 114, and then would come the second cup of wine. And then after that cup would be the eating of the lamb, the eating of the meal. That would be the great first course, or main course, I guess you should say.

And after the main course was completed would be the third cup of wine and after that they would sing the rest of the Hallel, Psalm 115, 116, 117 and 118. And then they would have a final sip of wine and one more Psalm and leave. That was the evening.

That could have all been done rather in a brief amount of time, however, it was strung out for many, many hours, being interrupted by all the other things that we talked about going on.

Early in this celebration in this sequence, our Lord says something that I think is important for us to hear in Luke 22:15 and16. “He said to them, ‘I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.’”

The language is very, very strong. Literally He says, “I desire with a desire,” that’s emphatic in the Greek. This is a very strong passion, “I must celebrate this Passover with you before I suffer. This has to happen for all the reasons that I told you.” Not only because it’s right because it’s commanded by God, but because He must make this transition. He must end an era. He must bring to a completion an entire system and launch a new one and He must lay out all the promises upon which every believer through all of redemptive history draws and He must tell them of the coming of the Holy Spirit, and He must confront their sin, and He must give them a lesson on humility and all these things are so compelling. He knows that He can’t die until all of this is clearly delineated to them and the Holy Spirit will bring it back to their memory in the future and they will write it down and it will be inscripturated and we will follow that instruction and cling to those promises. This has to happen before He dies.

He has, like everybody else, lived His whole life seeing animals sacrificed and all of them, He knew, pointed to Him. And now He was eating a meal at which the last legitimate Lamb was sacrificed and would be eaten and in a matter of hours it would be over. And He was the fulfillment of all those sacrifices. And in the view of His imminent suffering, He knows He will die, He knows He will not live to another Passover, He understands the urgency of this hour.

And there's another component, John 13 begins by saying this, "He loved His own who were in the world, *eis telos*, to the max, to the limit, to the end. It was not simply a theological demonstration here. What He said to them, what He promised to them, what He pledged to them, and what He called for them to do was all a part of loving instruction.

It was His profound love for them, as well as their profound necessity for the truth He would give them that compelled this to occur. He says in verse 16 of Luke 22, "I say to you, I'll never again eat this meal with you until it is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God." And with that statement, we have the end of all legitimate Passovers. It was a…it was a…this was His last meal before the cross, He ate the lamb and then became the Lamb hours later.

Will there ever be another Passover, legitimate one? Will there ever be? There will, He says that, please notice it. This is not going to happen, He says in Luke 22, until it is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God. Even Passover has not yet reached its final fulfillment. That's going to happen in the Kingdom.

Paul says, "We do this until he comes." Matthew 6:29 talks about the fact that it's going to occur in the Kingdom. It is unmistakable what He means in His earthly, millennial reign for a thousand years in Jerusalem in the future when He returns, He will celebrate the Passover meal with His own redeemed people again. He will.

The prophet Ezekiel gives a picture of the millennial worship in Ezekiel 4o to 48, that whole section is a picture of millennial worship, the worship of Christ in the Kingdom to come. Within that section of 40 to 48, right about in the middle, chapter 45 verses 21 to 25 describe the celebration of the Passover. There will be a temple built in the Millennium. There will be a Passover held at that time in the Millennial Kingdom, not as a memorial to the Exodus, but as a memorial to the cross…as a memorial to the cross, to the true Lamb. The Passover will be celebrated there, Christ will officiate at that celebration as He did with His disciples on that Thursday night and it will look at His death as the perfect Passover Lamb.

This is good news for them because He's talking about His death and they need to know that not only will He die, but He will rise and He will establish His Kingdom, and they will be there and He will be with them there and they will celebrate a Passover again. This is wonderfully encouraging to them, and they hung on this one. When He talked about His death, they didn't allow that to register. When He talked about the Kingdom, they got that. They were on that channel all the time. That's why in Acts 1 they said, "Will You at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?"

So He sees His suffering coming. He sees His resurrection. He also sees His Kingdom glory and He lets them know it's a reality, everything in the plan of God. That's from Luke. Now back to Mark.

We'll move a little faster. "As they were reclining at the table and eating, Jesus said, 'Truly I say to you that one of you will betray Me, one who is eating with Me.'"

Somewhere in the middle of this Passover, this last Passover, Jesus says, "One of you will betray Me. One of YOU." This is related back to Psalm 55, you probably remember that Psalm because it is familiarly linked, "For it is not an enemy who reproaches Me, then I could bear it, or is it one who hates Me who has exalted himself against Me, then I could hide Myself from him, but it is you, a man, My equal, My companion, My familiar friend who had sweet fellowship together, walked in the house of God in the throng." It's one of YOU!

Of course our Lord knew all along who it was. He knew it was Judas. He knew Judas' heart, He could read minds, John 2, He knew what was in the heart of man. In John 6 verse 7 He said, "One of you is a devil, an adversary, an enemy," and He knew who it was. He knew Judas and He knew his heart. You remember, don't you, recently back on Saturday that Mary had broken the vial of perfume, poured it all over Jesus and it was Judas who protested that the money could have been saved and this could have been sold and the money given to the poor. And the Scripture says he said it not because he cared about the poor, but because he held the purse and he was stealing from it all the time. Jesus knew that.

But the disciples didn't know it. He was a very skilled hypocrite…very skilled. So when Jesus said, "One of you will betray Me, one who is eating with Me," that was outrageous. When you had a meal with someone, that was safety, that was friendship. You didn't violate the person you were having a meal with, unthinkable in the Jewish culture. "One of YOU." Well they had no idea it was Judas.

Verse 19, "They began to be grieved and to say to Him, one by one, "Surely not I." The word "grieved," *lupeo* means to be distressed, sorrowful, profoundly pained. Matthew adds, "They were exceedingly *summotra,* strongly, violently distressed, agitated. John 13:22 says they were doubting of whom He spoke, they had no clue. For three years, Judas had been the most clever of hypocrites. When they preached, he preached. When they talked about the Kingdom, he talked about the Kingdom. When they prayed, he prayed. When they listened, he listened. Apparently when they healed, he was out there healing.

In their shock and disbelief, they had no clue. So one by one, each of them says, "Surely not I?" There's incredulity in that but there's a sense which you could call wholesome self-distrust. They knew their hearts. They knew they were weak. It is instructive to find out a little more detail about this by reading from the thirteenth chapter of John in verse 18, He says, "I don't speak of all of you, I know the ones I've chosen. I know who it is. But it is that the Scripture may be fulfilled," and then He quotes Psalm 41:9, "He who eats My bread has lifted up his heel against Me."

Well the disciples, verse 22, began looking at one another at a loss to know which of them He was speaking. And there next to Jesus was John, the one whom Jesus loved, he always calls himself like that. Simon Peter says to John, “Ask Him, ask Him, ask Him.” John said, “Lord, who is it? Who is it?”

“Jesus then answered, ‘That is the one for whom I shall dip the morsel,” so now we know they’re at the point where they’re ready to dip the bread and give it to him. “So when He had dipped the morsel, He took and gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. After the morsel, Satan then entered into him. Therefore Jesus said to him, ‘What you do, do quickly.’”

They were honest, humble haters of hypocrisy, these men. They were lovers of Jesus in their own way. They desired their master to give them an honest answer and they wanted to know if it was one of them. They asked an honest question. Judas was such an adept hypocrite, such a crafty thief that he had been stealing from the bad all along and they never knew that either. Judas was another Ahithophel. You remember the story of Ahithophel in 2 Samuel 16 who turned traitor against David and ended up strangling himself. As wretched and foolish as Judas was, as much as he operated on his own evil, wretched desires, he did not function outside the plan of God, nor did he alter the plan of God, or thwart the plan of God or adjust the plan of God, but verse 21 says, “For the Son of Man is to go just as it is written of Him. He is to go just as it is written of Him. And it is written of Him that He will be betrayed by a familiar friend, that He will be betrayed by one who lifts up his heel against Him who also takes bread with Him.” It is written of him. He will go the way it is written of him.

Every detail, the details of His crucifixion in Psalm 22, the meaning of His crucifixion in Isaiah 53, the detail of Him being pierced in Zechariah 12:10, the details of His resurrection in Psalm 16 and other features of Old Testament prophecy all prewritten. That is why when Paul preaches the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15, verse 3 he says, “Christ died according to the scriptures,” the next verse, “and rose the third day according to the scriptures.” Everything was laid out in Scripture. Our Lord was not killed at the whim of Judas, or Pilate, or Caiaphas, or Herod, or the Sanhedrin, or the Romans, or even Satan, but by God on God’s timing and in God’s manner.

“Still…verse 21 says…woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It would have been good for that man if he had not been born.” Because God used Judas in His plan, does not exonerate Judas. In case you wondered, God will use every human being who rejects Him to accomplish His own purpose in His own plan and none of them will be exonerated because our sovereign God overrules for His own ends and His own glories their choices. That’s nothing different with Judas than it is with anybody. If you think that, if anyone thinks that they can thwart the purposes of God by acting against Christ and against His church and against the gospel and against God Himself, that is a fool, to be sure. For God orders everything according to His own purpose.

Judas, like any rejecter, like any sinner, acts on his own motives…acts on his own choice, acts by his own will, as a result of his own mental machinations and the drivings of his own evil lusts. He

operates on his own greed and his own selfishness and his own materialism and he betrays Christ and He works it all out, yet everything He does is fit by God into a divinely chosen part of God's plan so that Judas plays a crucial role in the death of Christ, just as God designs. In fact, he was allowed to be an Apostle for that reason. Yet the Lord gave him opportunity even while he was there to believe the truth. The rejection was his choice and he'll be punished for it. "Woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. Woe to that man." Woe means cursed, damnation, hell.

And we know the end of Judas, don't we? He hanged himself, the rope broke and his bowels were exploded on the rocks below and he was thrown into the dump, the trash heap, outside Jerusalem, and worse into the eternal Lake of Fire.

By the way, there is no stronger statement in Scripture on human responsibility than the statement, "It would have been good for that man if he had never been born." That is the strongest statement that I know of in Scripture on human responsibility. We talk a lot about the sovereignty of God, but that is the strongest statement on human responsibility. Better never born than damned forever. The severest punishment of hell is for those who knew the most about Christ, Hebrews 10:29, if you know the most and you trample it underfoot, you will receive the severest punishment.

Add to what we've experienced, all the teaching in John 13-16, the High Priestly prayer of Jesus and other things the other gospel writers have told us, and you fill up that evening. It all ends, the greatest single observance that the Jews were given and it was before the priesthood, before the Levitical things, the remembrance of the Passover. It is now done until the Kingdom.

At this point, the record tells us Judas left. And he went to get his money and to tell the leaders of the Sanhedrin where they could find Jesus, in the Garden later. And now the eleven remain and the Lord instructs them on His table.

We come to verse 22, now I know we have several verses left, but this is something you're very familiar with. So I'm not going to spend a lot of time on this. "While they were eating, He took some bread." At some point in this Passover, pretty high drama by now, He blesses it, which is what went on as they ate, they blessed the cup, they blessed the bread, they blessed the Lamb, they blessed the whole event, He broke it, gave it to them and said, "Take it, or take, actually, this is My body."

Judas is gone now. Judas is gone. It's a good thing he's not there because you're not supposed to be at the Lord's Table and eat unworthily, 1 Corinthians 11:27. Although it wouldn't have changed anything with him. He took the bread, the *artos*, the flat bread, and He gave thanks, He blessed it. All the giving of thanks is why this is called the Eucharist, the Greek verb for thanks, giving thanks is *eucharisteo.* So the Roman Catholic Church calls it the Eucharist because of the blessing on the cup and the blessing on the bread.

He broke it, that's so they could all share, it was baked as a unit of some kind. That's not symbolic because not a bone of His body was broken, John 19:36 says, as it was prophesied. Broken only to be distributed, it was given to them, "Take, eat," then He said, "This is My body," and that's new. The bread of the Passover had never been anything but a memorial to the Passover itself in Egypt and the unleavened bread which they baked for that Passover meal, this is all brand new. In fact, Luke adds this, Luke 22:19, "This is My body which is given for you," that's so important, isn't it? "Do this," and here are the key words, "in remembrance of Me. Do this in remembrance of Me." That explains what this act means. It is remembrance. Paul got it, 1 Corinthians 11:24, "When He had given thanks, broke it, said, 'This is My body which is for you, do this in remembrance of Me.'" What is the point of the Lord's table? It is remembrance. It is a reminder of the gift of deliverance from sin through the body and blood of Christ. It was killed for us.

The Roman Catholic Church has prostituted this into something bizarre, into what is called transubstantiation whereby some priestly blessing, what is bread coming out of the kitchen becomes the actual body of Jesus in the hands of the priest. There's nothing in Scripture about that. The Lutherans didn't like that, so they came up with consubstantiation which says well it isn't the physical body of Jesus, but it's the spiritual body of Jesus. You're not eating Him physically, you're eating Him spiritually, neither of which is true.

Why do we do this? Do this in…what?...in remembrance. It is purely bread, simply wine so that we can remember. When they ate the Passover lamb, they weren't eating God. It was just a memorial, it was just a symbol. This is just a remembrance. Get so complicated now because the Catholic Church doesn't want you to spill the actual blood of Jesus so you can't ever drink that…only the priest can touch that because he's not going to spill it and whatever is left over goes…put in the freezer somewhere so it's protected. It becomes so bizarre. It's a remembrance, nothing more. By it we remember that He was bruised for our iniquities, that He was chastened for our peace, He was wounded for our transgressions. Isaiah 53,Galatians 3, that He was made a curse for us, He was made sin for us who knew no sin. That He bore in His own body our sins on the cross. All of those things that the New Testament talks about, it is simply remembrance. That is the bread and the cup is the same. When He had taken a cup, a cup…Matthew calls it THE cup. Luke, 1 Corinthians calls it THE cup and so does Paul, THE cup. That would correspond, I think, to the third cup of the Passover after the eating and before the final singing. This is often called the cup of blessing. He took the cup and gave thanks. He gave it to them, they all drank from it and He said to them, "This is My blood of the Covenant which is poured out for many."

You can't take the past and carry it on anymore. No place for Passover. That cup doesn't mean that. That bread doesn't mean what it used to mean. They all drank, the unity of believers there, in the Roman Catholic Church, one priest drinks for everybody. This is My blood of the Covenant. Shedding the blood was always God's requirement to establish a covenant. You see that in Genesis 8:15;

Exodus 24; etc. Covenants were established, promises were guaranteed by blood. Shedding blood was God's requirement to establish a covenant. Reconciliation with God, covenant relationship with God, entering in to God's promise of forgiveness and salvation required a blood sacrifice. That blood sacrifice could be an innocent substitute. Christ is that innocent substitute. He offers Himself on the cross. He pays the price for sin, satisfies the justice of God, takes our sins in His own body and bears in full the wrath of God for us and that is the act that validates and ratifies the New Covenant forgiveness.

Just a quick note. There's a lot of covenants in the Bible. God made a lot of promises. He promised not to drown the world again, that's the Noahic Covenant. He gave us the law, that's the Mosaic Covenant. He had a priestly covenant about the behavior of the priests. There was the Abrahamic Covenant which did promise salvation but no means. There is the Davidic Covenant which promises a Kingdom and a King, the Messiah and the future Kingdom. The new covenant promises forgiveness of sin, salvation, regeneration and new life. It is laid out in specific in Ezekiel 36, in Ezekiel 37 and in Jeremiah 31. It is a saving covenant. You get a new heart and a new Spirit and complete forgiveness. It's regeneration. That's salvation. That's always been in operation. It's always been in operation. But it was ratified by the death of Jesus Christ. The Old Covenant could be written constantly in animal blood because it was only a covenant of promise, it consisted of promise. The New Covenant is fully satisfied in the blood of one Lamb, the blood of Christ because it consisted not of promise but of fulfillment…fulfillment. The actual purchase of our redemption was made by Christ and He paid the price for the redemption of all the people who were before Him, all the way back to Adam.

The bloodshed, the blood which is shed, Matthew says, Matthew 26:28, the blood which is poured out. And here, please, it says, "This is My blood which is poured out for many…for many." Isaiah 53:12 says the same thing, He did this for many. Matthew adds, "For the forgiveness of sins.

Final payment was made, now there's no more need for the symbolic lambs, all we need to do is remember the cross…remember the cross. The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." So we come together, don't we? Regularly, all the time, we'll do it on Friday. In a sense, this sermon will be completed on Friday when we act out what our Lord has instructed His disciples on this night to do. And again giving confident hope, verse 25, "Truly I say to you, I will never again," strong emphatic language, "I will never, ever, ever again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the Kingdom of God."

Oh, so not only in the Kingdom to come will we be rejoined to the Lord, and not only will be rejoined to Him to come to His table to celebrate the Passover, but we'll also celebrate His table, Communion. That's the Kingdom. Matthew, Mark and Luke record this statement that I'll never do it again until I do it with you in the Kingdom. Folks, there has to be a Kingdom. This is the great Millennial promise. The Old Covenant has ended, the New Covenant has come, it has been ratified with the death of Christ. The last Passover, the first Communion, we celebrate that Communion till He comes. When He

comes, sets up His Kingdom, we will have a new kind of worship in which we will gather together as He leads us and celebrate a Passover and a Lord's table that both look at His cross.

Apostate Israel at this time has been cut off from blessing. We are the Gentiles who have been grafted in, Romans 9 to 11. We keep the Lord's Table memorial. We drop the Passover until the Kingdom when both will be a part of that great day.

Well it was almost over. They had one more…one more hymn to sing. I want you to look at it, Psalm 136 would have been their final Passover hymn…Psalm 136. Twenty-six verses and it's about the Lord. I'm just going to pick up the highlights. "The Lord is good. The Lord does great wonders. He made the heavens with skill. Spread out the earth above the waters. Made the great lights. Moon and stars to rule by night." And here we come. This was the closing of Passover. "He smote the Egyptians and their firstborn. He brought Israel out from their midst. With a strong hand and an outstretched arm and He divided the Red Sea asunder and He made Israel pass through the midst of it. And He overthrew Pharaoh and his army and the Red Sea and He led His people through the wilderness. And He smote great kings. You remember, and He slew mighty kings, Sihon, Og, and He gave their land as a heritage. A heritage to Israel His servant. He remembered us in our lowest state, rescued us from our adversaries. He gives food to all flesh. Give thanks to the God of heaven."

Twenty-six times, what line is repeated, "For His…what?...Lovingkindness is everlasting. That's what they sang. His loving kindness is everlasting. They repeated that statement 26 times. And if ever that statement should be repeated, it should be repeated by the people who understand the cross, right? Cause that's where His loving kindness in its everlasting nature is made available.

Father, we thank You for a wonderful time of worship and fellowship this morning. Every one of these portions of Scripture is so rich and so instructive and so divine, so supernatural. How our hearts are encouraged and lifted up. We think about the week to come and the opportunity to come to Your table on Friday, may it be infused with some fresh new joys and understanding. Would You prepare our hearts for that.

Lord, we know that in the midst of this, all this beauty, all this majesty, all this divine sovereign control of everything, the worst of men are plotting the death of the Savior. And even His own are going to defect and flee, as we'll find out tonight. Even at our highest moments, even at the exalted hour, being with Christ in that upper room and hearing everything they heard and all the promises, the whole thing, it was just one short step to weakness and failure. Deliver us from that, Lord. And strengthen us by what we hear tonight. And we ask now, Lord, that You will bring in to the prayer room those who need to come, those who need Christ, those who need to be saved from their sins, who don't need to go to Judas' place. Lord, I pray that You'll break open hearts and You'll give understanding to those that do not understand that You'll give clarity to those who are confused. May

they see the glory of Christ, open their heart to Christ, come to Him as savior and Redeemer, seek the forgiveness of sin and receive eternal life.

Father, we pray that You'll do that mighty work and that You'll enable us to help those folks. Draw them to those who can talk with them and pray with them. Continue to build our church and strengthen us for Your glory we pray. Amen.

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