

THE COVENANT- MAKING PRIEST

+ SESSION OUTLINE

1. The Son of Man will be betrayed as part of God's plan (Matt. 26:17-25).
2. The Son of Man will be sacrificed as part of God's covenant (Matt. 26:26-28).
3. The Son of Man will be celebrated as part of God's kingdom (Matt. 26:29-30).

Background Passage: Matthew 26

+ WHAT WILL MY GROUP LEARN?

In the Lord's Supper, Jesus presented a picture of the sacrifice He would make on the cross and also affirmed that He would be victorious: His kingdom would not fail.

+ HOW WILL MY GROUP SEE CHRIST?

After God made a covenant with Israel and sealed it through sacrifices, the people of God broke the covenant, worshiping false gods. God promised to enact a new covenant in which He would forgive sins and write His law on His people's hearts. At the last supper, Jesus explained that His sacrificial death would establish this new covenant and bring forgiveness of sin.

+ HOW SHOULD MY GROUP RESPOND?

Because we have new life through Christ, we celebrate the Lord's Supper, looking back to Christ's finished work and also looking forward to His glorious return when we celebrate it with Him.

GROUP TIME

Group content found in the Daily Discipleship Guide is included in the shaded areas throughout the session.



SCRIPTURE HANDOUT

Scan this QR code for a reproducible handout of this session's Scripture passages.

INTRODUCTION

ASK: As participants arrive, ask: **What is the craziest promise you've ever made to someone, and did you fulfill it?** (wait for a volunteer to respond first; only share your response as a conclusion to the discussion)

TRANSITION: As Jesus prepared to go to the cross, He instituted the new covenant with His people. In Christ, God would seal salvation through the sacrifice of His Son. The covenant required nothing of God's people. Jesus would complete all the work Himself. He would give His life as a ransom for many and shed His blood to pay the penalty for sins. Jesus, alone on the cross, would complete the work of salvation, and the Lord's Supper would be His people's reminder of their redemption in Christ.

SUMMARIZE: Help your group understand the **setting** for this session.

- Jesus continued His march to the cross, but He stopped to celebrate Passover with His disciples. The time of His departure was near, and one among them would betray Him. Yet Jesus did something more than simply predict His death and resurrection—He performed the first Lord's Supper. Christians have taken the Lord's Supper ever since as a reminder of Christ's broken body and blood shed upon the cross. This signifies the new covenant between Jesus and His people, a promise sealed by Jesus's blood to save His people from their sins.



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POINT 1

THE SON OF MAN WILL BE BETRAYED AS PART OF GOD'S PLAN (MATT. 26:17-25).

READ: Invite a volunteer to read aloud **Matthew 26:17-25** from his or her Bible.

17 Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Where will you have us prepare for you to eat the Passover?"

18 He said, "Go into the city to a certain man and say to him, 'The Teacher says, My time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.'" **19** And the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover. **20** When it was evening, he reclined at table with the twelve. **21** And as they were eating, he said, "Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me." **22** And they were very sorrowful and began to say to him one after another, "Is it I, Lord?" **23** He answered, "He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me will betray me. **24** The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born." **25** Judas, who would betray him, answered, "Is it I, Rabbi?" He said to him, "You have said so."

GUIDE: Point to #1 on **PACK ITEM 2: PASSION WEEK MAP**, showing the traditional location of the Upper Room, and to Thursday on **PACK ITEM 3: PASSION WEEK TIMELINE** to show where we are in the Passion week. Use **verses 17-19** and the notes below to guide your group to understand the following idea (DDG p. 74):

Jesus's death during Passover pointed to God's continual love and plan of salvation for His people through a sacrifice.

- Jesus directed His disciples to go to a certain man and let him know that "My time is at hand" and He would keep the Passover at his house. Jesus was speaking of the time of His impending death and sacrifice.
- Because many expected the Messiah to be a political and military leader who would restore the nation of Israel, not die for the world, Jesus's disciples had a hard time understanding that Jesus's death was part of God's plan.
- Jesus, in celebrating the Passover, a meal that commemorated God's rescue through a blood sacrifice, alludes to how His blood would be spilled for our salvation. God's plan in the Passover to save His people and in Jesus's sacrifice of Himself to save the world was precise.

COMPARE: Ask your group to compare God's plan of salvation in the Passover with His plan of salvation in Jesus's death when they answer (DDG p. 74):

How does God's plan of salvation reveal His love? (in offering mercy to undeserving people; in His patience in not giving up on His image-bearers; in His sacrifice of His Son for our salvation)



THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

Though some see the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread to be the same, to make a distinction, Passover is one day and the Feast is a period of seven days following Passover where only unleavened bread is eaten (Ex. 13:6-8). Both are a time to remember how God rescued His people out of Egypt from the bondage of slavery (Ex. 12:27; 23:15). For in the tenth plague, God sent the angel of death to kill the firstborn son in every home that did not have the blood of a lamb on the doorposts. If the angel saw the blood, he passed over that house. The lamb's blood was their salvation.

READ: Invite a volunteer to read the main idea for **verses 20-25** (DDG p. 74).

Judas's betrayal was all part of God's plan, even if Judas was in full control of his own actions.

DISCUSS: Understanding God's sovereignty and human free will can be difficult to understand for some. Use the sidebar note if needed as you ask the group to respond to the question below (DDG p. 74):

How do God's plan and our choices work together? (God is sovereign over all, and we are responsible for what we do; Jesus and Judas help us see how both divine sovereignty and human responsibility work together in God's grand plan; according to Scripture, both are true and real at the same time)

EXPLAIN: From **verses 20-25**, explain Judas's role in betraying the Messiah.

- As they ate, Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me" (v. 21). The disciples were shocked, but when Jesus walked into the room that night, He knew one of His closest friends would turn Him over to be killed. In fact, Judas had already made arrangements with the chief priests (vv. 14-16).
- You can almost feel the disciples' distress after Jesus spoke those words. They asked, "Is it I, Lord?" Jesus's statement graciously gave Judas time to consider his actions. Would he repent, or was his mind set on executing his plan? The ancient pastor Chrysostom commented, "He did not say, 'Judas, you will betray me' . . . This was again to offer time for repentance . . . He was willing to allow all the others to be alarmed, just for the sake of redeeming this one."¹
- Jesus's only answer came from Psalm 41:9. Jesus said, "He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me will betray me" (Matt. 26:23). Everyone would have dipped their hand in the common bowl. It was the natural way of sharing a meal at that time. So again, the Lord was sovereignly and graciously vague in His accusation.
- Jesus held fast to the plan. In verse 24, Jesus said, "The Son of Man goes as it is written of him," most likely referring to Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22. Jesus knew what His future held. But that did not mean His betrayer was innocent. Judas betrayed Jesus of his own accord. Judas was guilty of the sin, and Jesus knew His death was coming.

TRANSITION: As Jesus and His disciples gathered for their final meal together, Jesus foretold what would happen that night. The disciples were forced to look inside their hearts. But Jesus would continue to reveal His plan.

GOD'S PLAN AND HUMAN ACTION

God's sovereignty over all of life encompasses the free actions of human beings (Prov. 19:21). In ways we are unable to comprehend fully, the Lord's plan goes forward through the choices of human beings as moral agents. Even freely chosen sinful actions are factored into God's overarching plan, as is the case with the crucifixion of Jesus—an event both purposed by God through foreknowledge and yet also carried out by the wicked decisions of human beings (Acts 2:23). Knowing that God is working all things for the good of those who love Him (Rom. 8:28), we trust in His promise to fulfill His plan, even when we do not understand our present circumstances.

POINT 2

THE SON OF MAN WILL BE SACRIFICED AS PART OF GOD'S COVENANT (MATT. 26:26-28).

READ: Invite a volunteer to read aloud **Matthew 26:26-28** from his or her Bible.

26 Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." **27** And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, **28** for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

CHART: Lead the group in making a chart of the elements, characteristics, and symbolism seen in the Lord's Supper from **Matthew 26:26-28**.

EXPLAIN: Define from **verses 26-27** and the notes below the key doctrine of the Lord's Supper and its symbolic use (DDG p. 74).

Key Doctrine #92: Lord's Supper: The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming (1 Cor. 11:26).

- In this passage, Jesus and His disciples were eating the Passover meal—a specific meal of remembrance with each element an important piece of the exodus story. Traditionally, the narrative of God's redemption would be told throughout the meal. Here, Jesus gave new meaning and initiated a greater salvation not just for the Jews but for all who would trust in Jesus's sacrifice on their behalf.
- Jesus started with the bread. Verse 26 says He blessed it, broke it, and commanded them to eat it. But what He said next was unusual, to say the least: **"This is my body."** The broken bread symbolized the broken body of Jesus. Of course, His body was not yet broken. It soon would be on the cross. Jesus had previously told His disciples He would be killed in Jerusalem, and at the last supper, He reinforced that prophecy.
- In verse 27, Jesus took the cup and again gave thanks. He gave it to His disciples and commanded them all to drink it. Both the bread and the cup are to represent Jesus's sacrifice—His body broken and His blood poured out.

ASK: (DDG p. 74)

How does looking at the Lord's Supper with fresh eyes change the way you approach partaking of it with the church? (reminds us to remember Christ's saving work and not take it without thought; reminds us to confess our sins while knowing God forgives; reminds us to celebrate the new covenant we have with Christ)

VOICES from CHURCH HISTORY

"The bread broken, and the wine poured out, signify to us the agony and ignominy of Christ's sufferings, the rending of Christ's body on the cross, and the effusion of blood which was distilled from his blessed side."³

—Thomas Watson
(1620–1686)

ILLUSTRATE: Explain from **verse 28** and the bulleted points that Jesus brought a new covenant for the forgiveness of sin (DDG p. 74).

The new covenant Jesus initiated was the fulfillment of the promises found in the Old Testament—as the first covenant was sealed with the blood of goats and bulls, so the new covenant is sealed with the blood of Christ.

- The phrase **“blood of the covenant”** has deep Old Testament roots. When God led the people out of Egypt to the promised land, He made a covenant with His people. God commanded Moses in Exodus 24:8 to throw the blood of sacrificed animals upon the people to seal the covenant the Lord had made with them. In the Old Testament, only two other times blood is thrown upon people: the consecration of the priests (Lev. 8:22-24) and the cleansing of the leper (Lev. 14:14,25). Leon Morris points out that both signify the transition from defilement to newness of life in the service of God.²
- Jesus may also have had Jeremiah 31:31-34 in mind, in which God promised a new covenant to give His people a new heart. God’s salvation in this new covenant was about to be sealed by the blood of His only begotten Son on the cross. The salvation the world had been longing for was at hand.
- The author of Hebrews adds meaning to Jesus’s words when he harkens back to the cross in Hebrews 9:12. Jesus entered the heavenly holy place not with the blood of bulls and goats but with His own blood to secure an eternal redemption for His people. As the author of Hebrews says, “Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins” (Heb. 9:22).
- The blood of Jesus was spilled upon the cross, and it became for us the means of cleansing our souls before the Holy God. By enduring crucifixion and God’s wrath against sin for us, Jesus’s blood grants forgiveness. As our sacrificial substitute, His blood was shed so ours doesn’t have to be. His life was given for us. Now, by an act of God’s mercy and grace, His righteousness is granted to us. In Christ, we have the security of the covenant promises.

DISCUSS: Having made sure your group understands the word “covenant,” discuss the following question (DDG p. 74):

How does the word “covenant” help us understand the security found in Christ’s sacrifice? (Jesus promises to be with us faithfully, giving us eternal life with Him; a covenant/promise from God cannot be broken; God’s promise to His people is to do what they cannot do on their own, to save them from their sins and to cleanse them forever; understanding the importance of God’s covenant assures us of His salvation and frees us from the fear of His wrath)

TRANSITION: Jesus met with His disciples for a final meal in the upper room. There He initiated the terms of the new covenant, sealed by His blood. But He continued by reminding them He would see them again.

COVENANT

A binding promise made by one person to another to bless or serve him. Covenants often came with a sign. Jacob and Laban made a pile of stones (Gen. 31:46-48); God gave Noah the sign of a rainbow (Gen. 9:12-15); circumcision was the sign of the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants (Gen. 17:10-14; Ex. 12:47-48); and baptism is the sign of the new covenant (Col. 2:9-12).⁴

POINT 3

THE SON OF MAN WILL BE CELEBRATED AS PART OF GOD'S KINGDOM (MATT. 26:29-30).

READ: Invite a volunteer to read aloud **Matthew 26:29-30** from his or her Bible.

29 I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." **30** And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

EXPLAIN: Using the content below, explain from **verse 29** that though death was imminent, Jesus wanted His disciples to know the future was not bleak (DDG p. 75).

Though Jesus was about to suffer and die, He was going to accomplish the salvation of His people, allowing them to enter the kingdom with Him for eternity in celebration.

- At times in Jesus's earthly ministry, He spoke in parables that veiled truth from those who did not have ears to hear. But among His disciples, He spoke plainly and clearly. Here He did so again. "I tell you" in verse 29 means Jesus told them something significant. His days of drinking from the same cup as His disciples were coming to an end for a while. But one day, He would join them again around the table. Or more accurately, they would join Him around His table.
- This was a prophecy of future joy. After what must have been a jolt to the disciples' emotions, Jesus ended their time together with eternal hope. His Father has a kingdom, He is going to it, and they will be there one day too. The triune God was involved in this. The salvation brought about on the cross is the work of the Godhead, working in unison to accomplish redemption for His people. The Passover meal Jesus shared with His disciples was only a foretaste of the family meal to come in the Father's house.

DISCUSS: (DDG pp. 73,75)

From Day 5 in the DDG: **Knowing you will see Jesus one day, how does that encourage you daily?** (gives me joy anticipating that day; gives me hope for a future kingdom; gives me peace knowing this life is temporary)

SAY: Read the following statement on **verse 30** (DDG p. 75):

The last supper ended with a song of worship, giving God the glory and rejoicing in His faithfulness, anticipating the fulfillment of God's salvation plan.

SAY: “It was customary at the Passover meal to sing Psalms 115–118, a section known as the *Hallel*. Perhaps Jesus and His disciples sang together one of those psalms that night. If so, it was fitting. Psalm 115 is about giving glory to God’s name. Psalm 116 is a confession of love to God. Psalms 117 and 118 rejoice in the faithful, enduring love of God.”

INTERACT: Break up the group into four groups, with each group taking one of the psalms from Psalms 115–118. Suggest each group look at how these passages relate not only to the exodus but to this moment in history relating to Jesus. Invite each group to share their thoughts.

SUMMARIZE:

- The Passover meal ended with a song of worship to God. The God whom the disciples praised was the One going to the cross for them. Jesus was the One who washed their feet before dinner that night (see John 13:1-17). Jesus knew one of them would betray Him yet did not grow angry or aloof. He knew the suffering that was coming yet made time to explain to them what it would mean. He instituted the new covenant and would seal it with His blood.
- From the dinner table, they went to the Mount of Olives. The “hour,” or the time of Jesus’s crucifixion and death, was drawing even closer. Jesus would soon be betrayed, crucified, and killed. But it would come after the time of worship in the upper room, singing a song of God’s love for His people, looking forward to the day when they would meet again over a meal and hymns in the Father’s house.

ASK: (DDG p. 75)

How do songs of worship impact your life? (uplifts my spirit when I’m down; reminds me of God’s character; helps me find the words to praise Him; stirs my soul to humble submission)

PRAISE: Consider one or both options below as you conclude this point.

- Read together as a group Psalm 117 as a hymn of worship.
- Pass out copies of **PACK ITEM 9: HALLELUJAH HYMN** for your group to sing together in worship of Jesus for His sacrifice for our sins. You may wish to enlist a piano or guitar player in your group ahead of time to lead the song.

TRANSITION: As the last supper ended, Jesus and His disciples sang a song of praise to God together. It was the most fitting end to their time together before Jesus endured the suffering of the cross.



MY RESPONSE

SAY: After God made a covenant with Israel and sealed it through sacrifices, the people of God broke the covenant, worshiping false gods. But God promised to enact a new covenant in which He would forgive sins and write His law on His people's hearts. At the last supper, Jesus explained that His sacrificial death would establish this new covenant and bring forgiveness of sin. So when we celebrate the Lord's Supper, we look back to Christ's finished work and look forward to His glorious return when we celebrate it with Him.

HEAD:

As Jesus neared the end of His earthly life, He knew what awaited Him. That the Son of Man would suffer and die on behalf of His people was the gospel story told from the opening pages of the Bible. And as the first covenant was sealed by animal blood, the new covenant was sealed by Christ's blood to rescue a people beloved by the almighty God.

What characteristics describe a God who would sacrifice His own Son to redeem humankind?

HEART:

Isn't it striking that Jesus and His disciples ended the last supper with singing? Praise is always the proper response to God's work. Even when the future appears grim, the Bible helps us see that the future for God's people is always bright. God is on His throne, everything is going His way, and He loves us. Because of these truths, we can sing praises to Him out of a truly joyful heart because we know the steadfast love of God never ends.

How does the good news of the gospel compel us to praise God?

HANDS:

What Jesus did on the cross was the only way to save God's people forever. Because He accomplished His work, we now have the greatest story ever told to share with the world that desperately needs to hear it. Our message is one of a Savior who came to save His people, who stooped low to wash their feet, who gave His body and shed His blood to atone for their sins, to give His life as a ransom for many. It's the greatest story ever told, and it is our joy to share it with everyone we know.

With whom can you share the good news of salvation this week?

PRAY: Father, thank You that You fulfill Your promises. Thank You for sending Your Son to die for our sins. We are so thankful for Your grace, mercy, and love. Help us show that same mercy and love to others this week for Your glory! Amen.

VOICES from CHURCH HISTORY

"Be assured, that the more constantly and entirely you feed on Christ below, the better shall you be prepared for the nearest intercourse with him above, and the fullest possible communication of all his blessings to your souls."⁵

—Charles Simeon
(1759–1836)

POINT 1: THE SON OF MAN WILL BE BETRAYED AS PART OF GOD'S PLAN (MATT. 26:17-25).

+ COMMENTARY

“People sometimes ask how Judas can be punished for doing what God ordained that he would do. How, they wonder, can his action be free if it fulfills the predetermined plan of God? A scene from family life may help answer the question. Parents of active young children become serious students of the vital question: How do we get our little beans into bed with a modicum of peace? Parents soon learn not to ask, ‘Do you want to go to bed?’ Rather they ask, ‘Would you like me to read you the story about the bunny, or the story about the monkey before we go to sleep?’ The child chooses a story before bed even while the parent predestines a story before bed. If parents can predestine a story before bed while letting their children choose a story before bed, then the Lord God, who is far wiser than we, can do so too.

The analogy is imperfect, of course, but there are others like it. We could also think of the attraction between a man and a woman. The couple chooses each other, yet couples often feel that they were placed together, even summoned to one another, pulled along by some inexorable force. The relationship is freely chosen, yet feels preordained.

These are only analogies. The Bible affirms two truths, side by side: God plans and humans freely, responsibly choose. The Lord’s control is so perfect that he can accomplish his purposes while granting us the freedom to follow our desires and purposes. Peter said this about Judas and his partners in crime: Jesus ‘was handed over to you by God’s set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross’ (Acts 2:23). The crucifixion fulfilled God’s plan, yet those who killed him acted responsibly, without constraint.”⁶

+ ILLUSTRATION

“When caught in a less than honorable situation many of us blame it on the devil. ‘The Devil made me do it,’ is more than words. It is an attempt to absolve ourselves of responsibility. ‘Ex-convict John Stephens told a Floyd County (Ind.) judge that he had a full-time job and intended to turn his life around, but had slipped when he tried to rob the Your Community Bank. “If I hadn’t been watching the news and seeing [other successful] bank robberies,” he said, he wouldn’t have been tempted.’”⁷

EXTRA

In the grand scheme of things, even though God is sovereign, we also have free will and are responsible for our actions. We cannot put the blame on others, or on God, when we are the ones who have sinned.

POINT 2: THE SON OF MAN WILL BE SACRIFICED AS PART OF GOD'S COVENANT (MATT. 26:26-28).

+ COMMENTARY

“The words over the cup fill out this idea. Blood . . . poured out is unmistakably sacrificial language, and the allusive phrase for many . . . identifies that ‘pouring out’ as that of the Servant of God of Isaiah 53:12, who ‘poured out his soul to death’, as ‘an offering for sin’ (Isa. 53:10). So the whole idea of vicarious suffering for the sins of God’s people which runs throughout Isaiah 53 underlies these words. Matthew makes this even more explicit by adding for the forgiveness of sins. And that last phrase, together with the mention of the covenant, echoes Jeremiah’s prophecy (31:31–34) of a ‘new covenant’ leading to the forgiving and forgetting of the sins of God’s people. The phrase blood of the covenant (echoing Exod. 24:8) recalls that God’s relations with his people had always depended on the sacrificial shedding of blood, and this new covenant is no exception.

So these words, rich in Old Testament associations, indicate that Jesus’ death will inaugurate the new relationship between God and his people to which the prophets looked forward. To speak of a covenant is to speak of a community of the people of God. From now on this community will be constituted by the sacrifice of Jesus, and will consist of those who by ‘eating’ and ‘drinking’ are identified with the benefits of his sacrificial death. Here, then, is the theological foundation for the theme, which has emerged throughout this Gospel, of a new basis of membership of the people of God. The Passover which brought about the formation of the nation Israel under the Sinai covenant (cf. the allusion to Exod. 24:8) now points forward to a new redemption constituting a true Israel in distinction from the merely national community of the old covenant.”⁸

+ OPTIONAL TEACHING ACTIVITY

In this study, we read of Jesus’s eating in the upper room with His disciples at Passover. Jesus regularly taught and ate with His disciples and others throughout His ministry as a sign of fellowship and unity, desiring to meet together often around food.

Consider hosting a potluck just for your group to fellowship together with a teaching time or without. Notice that around food, people are able to share their lives together more freely, enjoying hearing each other’s life stories and how Jesus plays a part in it all. In so doing, hearts are encouraged and lives are united around Christ, who binds us all together.

POINT 3: THE SON OF MAN WILL BE CELEBRATED AS PART OF GOD'S KINGDOM (MATT. 26:29-30).

+ COMMENTARY

“Matthew tells us that after the meal the disciples, like Moses, sang ‘the hymn’ and went to the Mount of Olives. Matthew does not tell us what hymn the disciples sang, but it may well have been all or part of Ps. 114–18 because those psalms are often sung at the end of Passover to celebrate God’s care of Israel and, in particular, the rescue from Egypt: When Israel went out from Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language, Judah became God’s sanctuary, Israel his dominion. The sea looked and fled; Jordan turned back. The mountains skipped like rams, the hills like lambs. Why is it, O sea, that you flee? O Jordan, that you turn back? O mountains, that you skip like rams? O hills, like lambs? Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the God of Jacob, who turns the rock into a pool of water, the flint into a spring of water. (Ps. 114) So sang the disciples celebrating God’s care of Israel in a time in which Israel was anything but victorious. That they sang the hymn, or one like it, is a significant political act. Singing can be a form of resistance, because to sing not only witnesses to but creates community. Singing, next to eating, is the most physical and communal form of behavior. Our voice comes from our body. When we sing our bodies are joined, making possible a good in common that cannot be destroyed even when a people are under occupation or persecution or otherwise do not seem to be in control of their own destiny. The Psalms are testimony to Israel’s understanding of how to survive as a people—the very form of survival is a song. It is, therefore, not surprising that a community bound in unity through the body and blood of Jesus is also a community that not only sings but must sing.”⁹

+ ILLUSTRATION

Sometimes we come to church not really feeling the music if it’s not to our taste or if we prefer a different style or arrangement. One day an older lady at a church populated with young people was asked by her pastor, “What do you think of the music at our church these days?” She responded, “I love it because the young people love it.” It was clear that she would prefer something different, but she was not going to let her preference stand in the way of singing with her brothers and sisters.

When the church gathers to sing praises to God, we look outward and upward to the God who is praiseworthy. Our voices lifted to Him ring out the truths of the gospel and lift our hearts to Him. We sing about what we love, and even if the song isn’t our jam, joining with the church in loud singing is a beautiful shot of redemption breaking into a tired, broken world. Would any of us have dared not join in singing the hymn with Jesus and the disciples after their Passover meal? Surely with Jesus there, our voices would have joined in song.

References

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