

THE COVENANT- MAKING PRIEST

+ **SESSION IN A SENTENCE:**

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.

+ **BACKGROUND PASSAGE:**

Matthew 26

+ **SETTING:**

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.

DAY 1

READ:

Matthew 26:17-19

FOCAL PASSAGE:

Matthew 26:18

NOTES

Jesus sent His disciples to the city of Jerusalem to prepare for the Passover meal. The Passover meal was to be eaten within the city limits (Deuteronomy 16:5-6), and as Jesus sent His disciples, He had worked all things out beforehand. They were to find a certain man and tell him that Jesus was coming to celebrate the Passover with His disciples in the man's home (Matthew 26:18).

The Teacher knew His time was near. Jesus was referring to more than just the time of the Passover. The time of His departure was near. The time of His suffering was imminent. The time of His crucifixion was fast approaching. The time of His death was only a day away.

Though His disciples failed to understand what Jesus meant, Jesus knew exactly what awaited Him. He was the Suffering Servant who had come to His people to save them from their sins (see Isaiah 42:1-9; 49:1-7; 50:4-9; 52:13-53:12). Jesus was ready to lay His life down as a ransom for many. He was the Lamb ready for the slaughter so that His blood could cover the doorposts of His people's hearts.

The time was near, and He faced it faithfully. He faced it willingly, lovingly, and sacrificially. He faced it for you.

How does Jesus's knowledge of His coming suffering and death add weight to the glory of His sacrifice for you?

DAY 2

READ:

Matthew 26:20-25

FOCAL PASSAGE:

Matthew 26:22

NOTES

On the night of the last supper, Jesus reclined at the table with His disciples. He let them in on what was to come, though it must have been difficult for them to comprehend. He was nearing the time of His death. It was an unbelievable turn of events, but what Jesus said next was probably even harder to believe. In Matthew 26:21, Jesus boldly declared that one of them would betray Him. In response, the disciples were deeply distressed, and each one said to Him, “Surely not I, Lord?”

The next moments likely were very tense as each disciple searched His own heart for disloyalty to Jesus. Of course, Jesus meant this for Judas, but He did not clarify that to the others. It was a solemn moment that left space for repentance where needed.

It’s easy to overlook the grace of that moment. Jesus could have ratted Judas out. He could have told them all what was coming. He could have saved His own life. But He didn’t do any of those things. He kept it a secret between Himself and Judas.

Jesus washed Judas’s feet too (John 13:1-11). Jesus broke the bread and gave it to Judas too. Yet Judas still turned away from Jesus. There is a lesson here for us. The grace of Jesus isn’t hard to find. It is always available. But like Judas, we might choose to turn away. Let’s never do that.

What is in your heart right now that you can confess to God?

VOICES from CHURCH HISTORY

“The cross shows the seriousness of our sin— but it also shows us the immeasurable love of God.”¹

—Billy Graham (1918–2018)

DAY 3

READ:

Matthew 26:26-30

FOCAL PASSAGE:

Matthew 26:28

NOTES



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 Corinthians 11:26).

In the Old Testament, everything centered on the covenant God made with His people. Without the promises of God, the people of Israel were nothing. How could they be? They were wayward. They sinned. They rebelled. Without God's everlasting promise to save them, they had no hope. At times it appeared that God's people would never see the fulfillment of the promise. They were conquered and driven from their land. There were many dark days in Israel.

Are there dark days in your life as well? Do you feel as though you have strayed from God? Do you have regrets, and do you wonder if God could forgive you and take you back?

The Bible proves that God's covenant promises are stronger than our failures and sins. God's promises depend not on our strength but on His character. God cannot lie, and therefore, His promises cannot fail to come to pass.

As Jesus administered the first Lord's Supper in the upper room with His disciples on the night before His death, He foretold how the new covenant would come to pass. It wouldn't be based on the disciples' strength of faith. They all would soon abandon Him in His hour of need. Thankfully, it would be based on His obedience to the Father, and it would be sealed by His own blood.

Though our sins are many, God's forgiveness and mercy abounds even more. The blood of the covenant proves it.

What promises of God as seen in Scripture can believers hold on to in the midst of trial?

DAY 4

READ:

Matthew 26:17-30

FOCAL PASSAGE:

Matthew 26:26-28

NOTES

Perhaps the most difficult part of faith is believing our sins are actually forgiven. We know who we really are. We know what we've really done. In the dark night of the soul, we sense that our sins are too great for forgiveness. Forgiveness seems, at times, too easy a way out. Could God simply overlook the evil that we have done, the evil that we are? Can God really just forgive us?

Well, the answer to that is yes—and no. Yes, God can forgive you, but no, it's not a simple overlooking of evil. He doesn't "just" forgive you. Forgiveness is more than God's pronouncement of acquittal. Forgiveness is God's accomplishment of the payment for your salvation in Christ.

On the cross, Jesus poured out His blood for the forgiveness of sins. Our sins are not easily forgiven. Our sins are atoned for by the blood of Christ. On the cross, when Jesus bled, He took upon Himself all our sins and took the penalty of God's wrath for them. He did that as our substitute so we wouldn't have to face that end. Jesus took on human flesh and lived a perfectly sinless human life so that He could spill human blood in His sacrifice for sins to usher in God's forgiveness. Because of that, you are truly, thoroughly, and freely forgiven when you trust in His work on your behalf on the cross.

How should we live our lives, being aware of the cost it required for God to forgive us, the cost which God paid in Jesus Christ?

DAY 5

READ:

Matthew 26:17-30

FOCAL PASSAGE:

Matthew 26:29

NOTES

As Jesus ended His final supper with His disciples, He did so on a note of hope. It was, no doubt, a somber affair. Jesus revealed that one of His disciples would betray Him. Jesus spoke of His death in bringing about the new covenant, with His blood poured out and His body broken. But as the meal ended, Jesus spoke about a hopeful future where He would drink again from the cup with them in His Father's kingdom. Jesus knew He was going to die, but He wasn't mourning His own death. He was going home, and He will bring His people with Him.

For the Christian, the future is always bright. We may suffer here on earth. One day, we will even die. But in Christ, we have a future so bright that we cannot but have hope for better things to come. When Jesus secured our salvation on the cross and in His resurrection, He gave us a future with Him in His Father's kingdom that no one can take away from us. All who trust in Christ will one day live with God in eternal happiness where sadness cannot grow and death will not be alive.

Knowing you will see Jesus one day, how does that encourage you daily?

GROUP

NOTES

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.”²

—Thomas Watson (1620–1686)

POINT 1: The Son of Man will be betrayed as part of God’s plan (Matthew 26:17-25).

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

? How does God’s plan of salvation reveal His love?

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

? How do God’s plan and our choices work together?

POINT 2: The Son of Man will be sacrificed as part of God’s covenant (Matthew 26:26-28).

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 Corinthians 11:26).

? How does looking at the Lord’s Supper with fresh eyes change the way you approach partaking of it with the church?

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.

? How does the word “covenant” help us understand the security found in Christ’s sacrifice?

POINT 3: The Son of Man will be celebrated as part of God's kingdom
(Matthew 26:29-30).

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.

? From Day 5: **Knowing you will see Jesus one day, how does that encourage you daily?**

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.

? **How do songs of worship impact your life?**

MY RESPONSE

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.

- **HEAD:** What characteristics describe a God who would sacrifice His own Son to redeem humankind?
- **HEART:** How does the good news of the gospel compel us to praise God?
- **HANDS:** With whom can you share the good news of salvation this week?



Scan this QR code to access this session's Scripture passages.

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."³

—Charles Simeon (1759–1836)