

The Lord's Supper

Jesus Gives Thanks & Giving Thanks for Jesus

Foundation

Bible passage: Luke 22.15-20

On the evening before Jesus was put to death, He ate a private meal with the 12 disciples. They had many meals with him over the past three years and some of them were very memorable but this especially so. Much happened at the meal, and John particularly gives us some of the detail, but Matthew, Mark, Luke and Paul all narrate what we think of as the most significant part.

It was a Passover meal and although we don't know exactly what happened at a typical meal in those days some of the things are what we find in later Jewish practice. Food would have been shared, and much of it had symbolic significance as we read in the Old Testament. They would also have given thanks, as happened at most meals and we saw in the previous unit.

Luke tells us that Jesus first took a cup of wine, gave thanks, and told them to divide it among them (v17). Then he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and also passed that around (v19). Then after supper he passed around the cup a second time (v20).

“He took a cup... He took bread... and when He had given thanks...”

In many ways this was no different an ordinary Passover meal or to how people give thanks for food before they eat but what made it special was what Jesus said about the bread and wine and how He told His followers to do the same thing to remember Him.



From early days Christians did just that. In the Bible it is called “The Lord’s Supper” but also described as communion (fellowship) therefore we often refer to it as Holy Communion. In later times people began to give it the Greek name Eucharist, meaning Thanksgiving. Giving thanks for the food was clearly part of what happened, but only part. Nevertheless when Christians do this today, and remember Jesus and “proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes” (1 Cor 11.26). But as we do these things we also give thanks for Jesus, for all that He did and taught, but especially that He died for our sins.

Booklet:

What did Jesus give thanks for? - the bread and wine.

What did Jesus then do with the bread and wine? - he gave it to the disciples to share

Reflection:

Why do Christians especially remember what Jesus did at that meal? - because Jesus told us to, and because it reminds us why Jesus came to die for us (we proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes - 1 Cor 11.26)

What do they give thanks for when they do this? - Jesus and His death for us.



As Christians share bread and wine they remember Jesus’ death for us and give thanks to God for Him.