

**Mark 14.12-31**

Clint Le Page

Main Point – Jesus sacrificed his life for you, don't reject him

Every month at Bundy we share in the **Lord's Supper**, but why do we do that?---

What's the purpose of it; n' why does it matter?

Is it just eating a tiny piece of bread and a sip of grape-juice? Or more than that?-----

It is more than that, which is why we ask people to have been baptized and professed faith in Christ, like Angus has, before eating.

Tonight we'll consider what it means, and how we should respond.

For one thing the Lord's Supper definitely tells us is, we need a Sacrifice, we need forgiveness.

And we must never forget who gains our forgiveness.-----

And if we know we're forgiven by Jesus, it'll lead to thankfulness and love.

In last Sunday's passage it was two days before the Passover.

And remember you met that woman, Mary, and Jesus was worth everything to her.

Even her precious \$70,000 heirloom.

And we were challenged to consider, What is Jesus worth to us?-----

Will we be selective and compromise in our commitment to him?-----

Tonight we see Jesus not compromise in his commitment to save us.

Even when we fail him.

**My first of 3 points tonight is,(SLIDE) Passover.**

As Andrew said, and we read in **Ex 12**, Passover kicked off the festival of Unleavened Bread. 7 days of eating bread without yeast, to remember that when the Israelites fled slavery in Egypt, they had no time to wait for their bread to rise.

**V12** says 'on the first day of Unleavened Bread when they sacrifice the Passover Lamb.'

Technically the festival didn't begin until sunset, but practically speaking it was when they sacrificed the lamb on the Thursday.

Passover was the festival to remember, the Lord and his destroyer 'passing over' (**SLIDE. Ex 12.12,23**) all the Israelites' homes, and not killing their first-born sons. Because the lamb's blood was smeared on the door frames.

The lamb was sacrificed and effectively died in the place of the first-born.-----

So they could all be saved from slavery, and come to God and his Promised Land.---

In the Passover meal celebrated each year,(**SLIDE**) the father would start with a blessing.

Asking God to bless the meal and the 1<sup>st</sup> of 4 cups of wine.

He'd then explain the bitter herbs, like horseradish, symbolize the bitterness of bondage in Egypt. The unleavened bread their escape in a hurry. And the lamb, the lamb's blood on the door posts.

So the Passover meal was a way of remembering and explaining the meaning of the Exodus salvation.-----

And Jesus' disciples ask about where they'll make preparations for it in **v12**.

And Jesus sends two of them, saying, a man with a water jar will meet you.

We assume Jesus had already arranged this with the owner, or just knew what was to happen (cf. Mt 26.18)

The disciples go in **v16**, and find things just as Jesus said they would.---

Deut 16 (v5-8) says the Passover was to be celebrated where the temple was, so Jerusalem,

And with the heat coming down on Jesus from the religious leaders, the owner of this house takes a real risk to host Jesus and his disciples.

He's willing to side with Jesus.-----

It also shows that Jesus is not a tragic hero caught in events beyond his control.

Even as his death comes, there is no hint of anger, fear, futility or fleeing for his life, is there?

Jesus displays in this planning and intentionality, a sovereign freedom.

So the disciples prepare this last Passover meal with Jesus.

It's the night before Jesus will die, and he arrives at the upper room with his 12 disciples.

And we come to **Point 2, Predictions.**----

They are eating the meal and at some point, Jesus makes this first prediction, **v18** –

“Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me”.

A word that describes giving into the hands of another, like handing someone over to their enemy.

And the offence and shame of Jesus' betrayal is highlighted by the words 'one who is eating with me'.

And v20, 'one of the twelve- one who is dipping bread in the bowl with me'.

It's surely a reference to **Psalm 41.9.(SLIDE)**-----

As many of you will know, in that 1<sup>st</sup> century eastern culture to share food, share a meal with someone was a symbol of welcome and friendship.

So to betray Jesus the host, and stab a friend in the back, was a terrible betrayal.

It is inexcusable and heinous, to have fellowship violated by a traitor.-----

When Jesus predicts that one of the 12 will betray him, they all deny it.

Judas Iscariot isn't named here, but **Matt 26 (SLIDE,v25)** has him also saying, 'Surely not I'.

That is a blatant lie to Jesus' face, for v15 tells us(**SLIDE**) he'd already promised to betray Jesus for money.-----

It's been said that the main motives for murder are: love, lust, loathing and loot.

Loathing and loot/ money/ greed are surely Judas' motives for betrayal.-----

Jesus knows what is coming for himself.

He's already predicted his own death 3 times (eg.Mk 10.33), plus he just said Mary anointed his body for burial.

Jesus will go just as it is written about him.

The 'Son of Man' glorious ruler is also the suffering Servant of Isaiah 53.

Jesus will die and then rise.

God will not be thwarted by evil, but will accomplish good out of the evil choices of others.

But woe to that man who betrays the SoM! 'It would have been better if he had not been born'.

What scary, terrifying words.

Judas' judgement in hell will be terrible, and eternal.-----

This tells us that God is sovereign, yet Judas is also morally responsible.

Humans are accountable and will be held accountable for their choices, whether it's Judas or us.

Do you accept this?

How do you feel about this?-----

If Jesus has not taken your judgement, then you will cop it.-----

So there is a warning for us all – never walk away from Jesus.

Never “spit in his face” & abandon him, or you'll be lost too.-----(**Heb 6.4-8**)

We'll come back to the last Supper, which is sandwiched between two predictions of two failures.

And the **second prediction is**, 'You will all fall away on account of me', **v27**.

The Greek word here for 'fall away' speaks of a stumbling block which makes someone trip or fall.

In this case Jesus & his arrest leads to them falling away from him, in the sense that they desert him.

It's like they get fearful of being associated with Jesus and suffering his fate.

Fearful or even displeased at being connected with Jesus.-----

Judas was guilty of intentional, planned treachery.

Whereas the others' more guilty of cowardice.

Theirs is more weakness, and failing to be faithful.-----

Judas will not be forgiven for his betrayal, the other disciples will be.-----  
 For Jesus says in **v28**, 'after I have risen I will go ahead of you to Galilee'.  
 They will go to Galilee too and see him there.  
 But Peter misses this and only focuses on his own loyalty

"Even if everyone falls away, I will not!"

Even when Jesus blatantly says and predicts, tonight, before a rooster crows twice, you will disown me three times, Peter still denies it  
 Yet in a matter of hours he does.

At the end of ch14 we see Jesus' prediction come true.-----

What Jesus predicts and says will happen, always happens.-----

The disciples run away from Jesus to save their skin.

3 times Peter denies he's a follower of Jesus, to save his skin.-----

Peter had pride in his own strength, when he, and they, and we, are actually weak.

And circumstances, opposition, fear, pressures, temptations **can make us fail in faithfulness to Jesus.(SLIDE)**

I just read this week about Christians enduring terrible persecution in North Korea, so parents can't even pray or read their Bible in front of their kids, as schools encourage them to betray Christian parents.

And Christians endure starvation torture and death in labour camps.-----

We have freedom.

Yet there's been times in my past when I've kept quiet and not said I'm a Christian.

There's been times when I've failed to speak up for Jesus cos' I wanted to fit in.

And so many times when I've loved sin more than I've loved my Saviour.----

I know what it is to feel guilt and shame, and be convicted of my sins and failures.

What about you?-----

What temptation or pressure are you facing at the moment that tests your faithfulness to Jesus?-----

In **v27** Jesus quoted **Zech 13.7**, which predicts that the shepherd, Jesus, will be struck, and the sheep will scatter.

Which happens in Mk 14 v50.

But there's a purpose in God striking the shepherd isn't there?

**Isa 53.10 says(SLIDE)** the Suffering Servant is struck down by God, crushed for our iniquities, punished in our place for our sins.

But interestingly the **start of Zech 13 says,(SLIDE)**

"On that day a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the residents of Jerusalem, to wash away sin and impurity."

So the shepherd will be struck as part of God's will, to create a new people of God, who will be cleansed of their sin, forgiven and transformed.

Because of Jesus there is forgiveness.-----

**This brings us to Point 3, Poured out blood.(SLIDE)**

**V22**, during that Passover meal, Jesus took bread and blessed it, praised God for the gift, broke it and gave it to them.

Saying these now famous words, 'Take it, this is my body'.

Clearly with Jesus there he didn't mean the bread was his actual body.---

**Ray Galea(SLIDE)**, grew up in the Roman Catholic Church, and was taught that after the priest blesses the bread, its substance changes (transubstantiation).

In the Mass the bread and wine turn into the body and blood of Christ, without its physical properties changing.

Ray says Roman Catholicism teaches that the bread & wine the priest holds, truly become the body and blood of Christ himself.

Which the priest then re-offers to the Father.-----

For Roman Catholicism kept wanting to find a place for human participation in the work of redemption.

And we can all understand the impulse to find a place for our own contribution.

But it is profoundly humbling, humiliating even, to stand before the cross of Christ and be forced to admit: 'There is nothing I can say, nothing I can do'.-----

Back in **v23** Jesus took the cup, likely the 3<sup>rd</sup> cup of wine in the Passover meal with its promise of redemption, gave thanks and gave-it to his disciples to drink, saying: 'This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many'.

Luke also records Jesus saying, **(SLIDE, Lk 22.20)**

"This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you".

The old covenant God made with Israel through Moses was also sealed and confirmed with blood.

In **Ex 24 (SLIDE[v6-8])** Moses took blood and splattered or sprinkled it on the people.

A visible sign that sacrificial blood and death was required to forgive sin & enter relationship with God.

Also, a visible sign that if you break the covenant and betray God, you'll become like the dead animal, with your blood on your own head.-----

But the prophets **Jeremiah (31.31-34,SLIDE)** and **Ezekiel (36.26)** promised that God would bring a new covenant.

It would be based on forgiveness, and bring new obedience from the heart.

Now on the eve of his death Jesus institutes this new covenant, sealed not with the blood of an animal, but his own blood.

He says, my blood will be 'poured out for many'.

'For' means on behalf of, or in the place of.

Jesus' blood-poured-out death, is in the place of others.

The Passover lamb(**1Cor 5.7,SLIDE**) was sacrificed to save the first born from death.

So Jesus our Passover lamb, dies to save us all from eternal death.

By bringing forgiveness for our sins(**SLIDE, Mt 26.28**).-----

If we trust him.

If you put your sincere and dependent trust in him.-----[Rom3.25]

God's covenant promise, his vow and pledge is to forgive the sins of people on the basis of Jesus' sacrifice, when we trust him.-----

Jesus' death will save many people, from all nations.

Even you and I.-----

Jesus' Last Supper then becomes a meal celebrated regularly for his people, the **Lord's Supper**.

It's so full of meaning, and I want to speak about that now.

And if or when you are going to receive the Lord's Supper I ask you to take **5 looks**. Look in 5 metaphorical directions – back, forward, in, up, and out.(**SLIDE**)

Let me explain.

When thinking about n' taking the Lord's Supper we **look back**.

When the apostle Paul teaches about it in 1Cor 11 he says that, Jesus said:(**SLIDE**)

, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

So we eat remembering Christ, whose body was killed on the cross for us.

We look back and remember Christ and him crucified, for our sin.-----

And we **look forward**.

Mk **14.25**, 'Truly I tell you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until I drink it new in the kingdom of God'.

Matt 26 (v29) has Jesus saying, until I drink it 'with you in my Father's Kingdom'.

And **1 Cor 11.26(SLIDE)**, in eating we proclaim the Lord's death 'until he comes'.

So we look forward to the day when Jesus will return and we will enjoy the wedding banquet in heaven (Rev 19.7-9).

The Lord's Supper should make us look forward to being with Jesus in the final & consummated kingdom to come, in the new heaven n' earth.

I hope the Lord's Supper makes you look fwd to being with Jesus.-----

We should also **look in**.

By that I mean we should look into our own hearts, at our own lives, and see our sin and our need for Jesus.

We should confess any sins that come to mind, and any lovelessness towards our brothers and sisters.

And we should repent of them – commit genuinely and wholeheartedly to turning away from our sin.

As **1 Cor 11.28 says(SLIDE)**, a person ought to examine himself (or herself), before they eat the bread and drink from the cup, so as to not eat or drink in an unworthy manner.

I asked earlier, Where you've been tested or failed in faithfulness to Jesus?

We should confess and repent of our sin against God and others that comes to mind, before taking the Supper.-----

But then we shouldn't stay looking within, we need to look to Jesus.

We should then **look up.(SLIDE)**

Look up in faith.

So if you've not put your faith in Jesus as your Saviour and Lord, don't eat and drink.

The Supper is only for those who've trusted in Christ crucified for them, and who are committed to him.-----

We should look up to God and his Son in faith, but **also look up with praise & thanksgiving** for Jesus and his forgiveness.(**SLIDE**)

So the Lord's Supper isn't to be like you're at a funeral.

**1Cor 10.16** even calls the LS cup, the Cup of **Blessing**, or thanksgiving.

From this we get the word 'Eucharist'.

I hope you will move from grief and sadness over your sin and the death of Christ it brought, to praise and thanksgiving.

That's why we call it, Celebrating the Lord's Supper.

So when you eat, praise the Lord Jesus who loved you and gave himself for you.

Praise God that Jesus is spiritually present with us when we share in the Supper.

Praise God that this special meal assures us of his love and forgiveness and presence now, and a future welcome into that heavenly banquet.-----

Deep thankfulness - Is that how you respond when having the Supper?-----

Jesus blood was poured out for many.

But I hope when you next eat and drink you will be able to say with gratitude and joy, "Jesus, thank you that your blood poured out for me"

And the last and **5<sup>th</sup> look, is look out; look out in love.**

**1 Cor 10.16 even says(SLIDE)** the meal is a' sharing in the blood of Christ', and sharing in the body of Christ.

The word 'sharing' speaks of participation or communion – spiritual communion with Christ and his people in the meal.

It's why it's sometimes called, 'holy communion'.

Christ is spiritually present, and wants to use the Supper to encourage your connection to him. Grow your faith, love and thankfulness.-----

He wants to use the meal to grow the loving communion and unity we have as a church.-----

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In the Corinthian church the apostle rebuked the divisions (1 Cor 11.18), and the church not eating together.

Some are getting drunk, others are missing out, likely the poor. **(11.21. SLIDE)**

It's partly why we give you individual portions, so no one misses out.

And if you're curious, we don't give alcoholic red wine as alcohol isn't allowed in presy church buildings, to stop any possibility of drunkenness.----

We need to recognise the body **(11.29. SLIDE)**

That Jesus' risen and ascended body is in heaven.

But by repentance and faith we're part of Jesus' spiritual body.

And we're all members of his body together, all brothers and sisters.

So we are to welcome one another **(v33)** Love one another.

And remember this meal around one table displays our unity with Christ, and with one another.-----

So do you need to change your thinking about the Lord's Supper?-----

Is there sin you need to repent of?

Or someone you need to seek forgiveness from?-----

Someone you need to forgive?

Someone you need to move toward in love, remembering you are part of one body?

So in the days leading up to the Supper in 3 weeks, look back in remembrance, look fwd to being with Jesus, look in and confess, look up in faith n' thankfulness, and look out in love.

That's how we should come to the Lord's Supper. **(SLIDE)**

All the disciples swore allegiance to Jesus.

Yet the 11 will flee in fear and Peter deny him.

But Jesus is our Passover lamb, and his blood was poured out for them, and for us.

And when you're filled with deep thankfulness for Jesus, who gave his life for you, you'll want to love him, and his people

So don't deny him or reject him.

Remember him, love him.

Stay faithful to him.

Let's pray.