



STORY

8/5/03

Jesus Institutes the Lord's Supper – Matthew 26:17-29; Mark 14:10-25, Luke 22:14-23, John 13:18-30

TEACHER PRAYER

Dear Lord Jesus, help me to appreciate the great love You have for sinful mankind. On the very night You were handed over to die for sinners, You left us with one of the most valuable gifts we can imagine, Your body and blood in Holy Communion. Help me to convey Your great love for us sinners to my students. I pray that You would work through me to help prepare these young lambs for the day when they come before Your altar. Help them to prepare now, that they might learn to rightly examine themselves later, never communing in an unworthy manner. Bless my imperfect efforts with Your divine power. Amen.

VOCABULARY

Unleavened – bread made without yeast

Passover – Jewish religious festival begun in Egypt on the day the Lord passed over the houses with blood on the doorposts and lintels.

Covenant – an agreement between two parties. Two types of covenants are found in the Bible: Suzerain-vassal (conditional) and Royal Grant (unconditional). There are two Bible examples of conditional covenants: 1.) Between God and Abraham in Genesis 17, where God promised to bless Abraham and his descendants on the condition of circumcision as a symbol of complete consecration to the Lord and his commands. 2.) Between God and the Children of Israel in Exodus 19-24, where the condition was devotion to the Lord on the part of the Jews. The other covenants were all unconditional. They include covenants between God and the following: Noah (Genesis 9), Abraham (Genesis 15), Phinehas (Numbers 25), David (2 Samuel 7), and all believers in the New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34). Here (in a figure of speech) Jesus speaks of the container for the wine as it were the wine when He calls the cup the blood of this same "new covenant."

OUTER AIM

Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper as his last will and testament.

INNER AIM

In Holy Communion we remember that Jesus died for our sins and He gives us the personal assurance that our sins are forgiven.

BACKGROUND

(Rupprecht Bible History References Vol.2, pp. 337-346)

We read in Luke 22 that the disciples had been arguing about who was greatest among them. To demonstrate the kind of humility Christians should have, Jesus washed His disciples' feet and (in John 13:14) told the disciples to do likewise. Our name for this day, Maundy Thursday, comes from the Latin word for "command" – *mandatum*. Some believe it is named for Jesus' "command" to wash one another's feet. More likely is that the day was originally named for the "new commandment" Jesus gave on this night in John 13:34, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another..."

The Lord's Supper was instituted during the Passover celebration. The Passover had been observed by the faithful since the exodus from Egypt. God Himself gave directions in Exodus 12 on how the Passover was to be celebrated. That is how we know exactly what elements Jesus used when He instituted His Supper. We know that the bread He used was unleavened since no yeast was to be used (or even found in the house) for seven days. We know Jesus used wine, not only because that was what was used by the Jews to celebrate

the Passover, but also because Jesus himself called it "the fruit of the vine" in Matthew 26:29.

v. 17-20

- ▶ The Feast of Unleavened Bread, which lasted seven days, began with the eating of the Passover meal. (Cf. Exodus 12)
- ▶ Jesus demonstrated His power and omniscience here (as He did before entering Jerusalem on Palm Sunday) by knowing in advance that the man who owned the upper room would make it available to them.
- ▶ It is possible that Jesus arranged this ahead of time with the man, but that only gives evidence that Jesus foreknew His own death.
- ▶ Prearranged or not, only Jesus could have known in advance about the man carrying the pitcher of water (Mark 14:13).
- ▶ Part of the preparation made by the disciples here was to purge the house of all yeast, in accordance with God's command in Exodus 12.

v. 21-25

- ▶ Jesus knew ahead of time not only that His time to die was at hand, but also which of His disciples would betray Him.
- ▶ In love He reached out to Judas with the law ("but woe to that man...")
- ▶ Note that Jesus did not offer the words of the gospel of forgiveness to an unrepentant sinner.
- ▶ John in his Gospel tells us that Judas went out immediately after receiving the sign from the Savior that he was the betrayer (John 13:30).
- ▶ This seems to indicate that Judas was not present at the time. Luke 22:21, on the other hand, seems to indicate that Judas was present, we admit that Luke's account might not be chronological, and John does not specifically mention at what point the Supper was instituted, whether before or after Judas left.
- ▶ The word "many" here is not meant to limit the number of people for which Jesus was to shed his blood. He clearly died to pay for all sins, as he taught in John 3:16, John 1:29, etc. The word "many" is used to contrast the fact that only one would pay the penalty for sins, rather than many. It was also a statement to the disciples on Maundy Thursday that the blessings of the Lord's crucifixion would extend beyond that small circle of followers present at the institution of the Lord's Supper.

v. 26-28

- ▶ Jesus here used the word "is" when instituting His Supper: "This is my body...this is my blood..." Is means is. There were other words He could have and would have used if He had meant "represents," "symbolizes," "becomes," or "is changed into."
- ▶ Based on Jesus' own words, we believe that His true body and blood are present "in, with, and under the bread and the wine when we eat and drink."
- ▶ Jesus' true body and blood are present in a heavenly, miraculous way.
- ▶ They cannot be seen or tasted. This is called "real presence" and we accept it by faith in Jesus' clear words.
- ▶ Note that these verses do not tell us to eat or drink for forgiveness (remission of sins).
- ▶ Jesus here tells us that we are to drink from the cup, which has His blood.
- ▶ It was His blood that "was shed for many for the remission of sins."
- ▶ The eating and drinking of the very body and blood of our Lord are a special, personal guarantee or seal of forgiveness earned for us by Christ's crucifixion.
- ▶ When faith is present in the heart, all sins stand forgiven.
- ▶ In Communion we are reminded of that fact.

v. 29-30

- ▶ Jesus referred to the cup as "the fruit of the vine."
- ▶ That this drink contained alcohol is beyond serious dispute, for without refrigeration grape juice will naturally ferment.
- ▶ This natural process is a blessing from God because fermentation kills the harmful organisms in the water.
- ▶ Jesus here prophesied that He would not repeat this celebration with the disciples until they share it in heaven.
- ▶ Indeed only hours later Jesus was arrested, tried, and executed.
- ▶ Until the events of the crucifixion and resurrection, the disciples probably did not understand and were confused by Jesus' words of institution.

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Jesus, thank You for the precious gift You gave to us on Maundy Thursday. On the very night You were betrayed to Your enemies You were thinking about us and what we would need to be strengthened while on earth. While I am young, each time the Lord's Supper is celebrated, help me to remember how You suffered and died for my sins. When I am older, help me to come to Holy Communion in a worthy manner – sorry for all my sins, trusting You for forgiveness, and certain that I am receiving Your true body and blood when I eat the bread and drink the wine. Amen.

PRESENTATION

The Words of Institution are very precise and very important. If you tell the story in your own words, it would be a good idea to read at least the words of Institution from Matthew 26.

ACTIVITY TWO- Teacher: Have students color the picture, using the questions below to guide the activity.

1. Color the part of the picture that Jesus tells us to take and eat. (bread)
What does Jesus also give us when we eat the bread? (His body)
2. Color the part of the picture of which Jesus tells us to drink. (cup)
What is in the cup? (wine) What does Jesus give us with the wine? (His blood)
3. Jesus gave His body for us and shed His blood for us on the _____. Draw a cross in the empty box. The cross reminds us that our sins are forgiven.

APPLICATIONS

1. Are we today obligated to wash each other's feet? What other loving actions could we do for each other today? Note that such things are only pleasing when they are done willingly, never by force or from a feeling of obligation.
2. Note that there was never a question if Jesus and the disciples would celebrate the Passover, only where (Matthew 26:17). So too there should never be a question about going to church each time we are able.
3. An unrepentant sinner like Judas needs to hear the threat of the law, not the pronouncement of forgiveness found in the gospel. Only the law can crush the proud, rebellious, sinful human heart. Unless the sinner first recognizes and repents of his sin, the news of a Savior can have no effect on him.
4. Jesus paid for all sins when he died on the cross. As children of God we don't have forgiveness for just some of our sins; we have forgiveness for all of our sins. Yet since we continue to sin every day, we need special, personal assurance that each sin has been paid for, and that complete forgiveness is mine because Jesus says so.

PASSAGES

These passages can be assigned as memory work or simply discussed in class as to how they fit the lesson.

Lower

Luke 22:19 - This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.

John 15:5 - Without [Jesus] you can do nothing.

Philippians 4:13 - I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Middle any of the above and...

Romans 4:5 - But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness.

Ephesians 1:7 - In [Christ] we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.

Matthew 26:28 - For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

Upper any of the above and...

1 Corinthians 10:16 - The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

Romans 6:22- But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.

1 Peter 1:18-19 - Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold...but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

HYMN CHOICES

"The Death of Jesus Christ our Lord" (TLH #163:1-2)

"Redeemed, Restored, Forgiven" (TLH #32:1,4)

"Glory Be to Jesus" (TLH #158:1-4)