



What is your attitude toward the Lord's Supper? How do you feel when you see it looming on the schedule ahead? What thoughts go through your mind when the bread and the cup are presented? As I have asked this question to Christians lately, do you know most everyone says? "It's boring," or "It makes me feel bad about myself," or "It makes me feel sorry for Jesus," or, "Quite honestly, I dread it." How can this be? In ordaining the Lord's Supper, has our Lord really called us to engage in something dreary, dreadful, and boring? The answer: Not on your life!

Why then do so many of us feel so wary about it? The answer: Because we have not really understood what we are truly doing when we celebrate the Lord's Supper together. For most of your life and mine, I can blame someone else for this misunderstanding. However, for the past four years in which I have served as your pastor, I can only blame myself. As your pastor, it is my charge from the Lord to bring God's Word accurately to bear on all that we are and all that we do. And, while our practice of the Lord's Supper has not been wrong in and of itself, I am convinced from Scripture that it has been significantly less than God intends of it and desires it to be. So today, I invite you to embark with me on a rediscovery of what Scripture teaches us about this most blessed ordinance that we call the "Lord's Supper."

To begin, with me to Luke 22, where we find the incident that forms the foundation for the Lord's Supper that we celebrate today.

-- Read Luke 22:14-20

-- Pray

-- Do you ever get really excited about having supper?

-- All week long, I look forward to Friday because Friday is usually date night. Thus, most every Friday, I am blessed with the unique and delightful privilege to have supper with my sweetheart.

- There is really nothing like sharing an intimate meal with the bride in whom you delight at the end of the work week. We talk, we laugh, we pray, we share a meal, and we rejoice in the blessed privilege we have to have been made one in the Lord.

- May I suggest that this experience is a lot like the eager expectancy and joy with which we ought to approach the Lord's Supper.

- Big Idea: The Lord's Supper is our rehearsal for a celebration of surpassing joy.

- Luke 22:14-20 – v. 15 – *“I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.”*
 - Notice our Lord's attitude here: Jesus was extremely excited about this supper in which He would establish the church's continuing ordinance of Communion.
 - *“eagerly desired”* = “with an eager desire I have desired”
 - v. 15 (NLT) – *“Jesus said, ‘I have looked forward to this hour with deep longing, anxious to eat this Passover meal with you before my suffering begins.’”*
 - This seems a lot like the way my girls have reacted to the prospect of going to Disney World this summer.
 - Shouldn't our attitude about this meal be the same as our Lord's?
 - What kind of eagerness do we see here in Jesus?
 - He isn't about to go to Disney World; He is about to die on the cross. This meal for which our Lord was so very eager would be His last meal before His horrific suffering would begin.
 - Why was so eager? Jesus knew He would be betrayed. He knew He would be arrested. He knew this supper was the gateway mockery, suffering, pain, torture, and death. And, yet, He says, *“I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you?”* Why? What is the benefit? How could Jesus have possibly been excited about this meal?
 - We need not look long for an answer. Jesus tells us why He was so eager to share this supper with His disciples in v. 16-18.

- v. 16, 18 – *“For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God... For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”*

- Notice: As Jesus ordains this meal for His disciples, He is very intentionally calling them to look ahead to the time when it will be fulfilled in God's Kingdom.
- In other words, at the very foundation of the Lord's Supper is a clear understanding that everyone redeemed in Christ will share this with Him again, in a much fuller sense, when He returns.
- Thus, the Lord's Supper is given to us as a picture on earth of a future feast in God's Kingdom.
- Well then, what kind of feast will this be? Again, we need not wonder long, because Revelation 19:6-9 makes it clear.
- Read Revelation 19:6-9
 - v. 9 – *“Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!”*
 - Are you in Christ today? If you are, do you realize how monumentally blessed you are for the unassailable fact that you are, thereby, invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb?
 - There is, you see, a heavenly wedding feast to come, in which all true believers will gleefully celebrate our eternal union to Jesus Christ as the bride He has redeemed. The Lord's Supper that we share today is meant to be an image of that great and glorious day.

So then, returning to the initial question, we once again ask: Why was Jesus so thrilled about having His last meal on earth with His disciples? He was so eager about it because it pointed to a supper of sublime celebration. This supper, you see, is about much more than just these few moments at church. It is about so much more than chomping a wafer and slurping some juice. By the wisdom and grace of God, the Lord's Supper stands as a precursor to an unimaginably glorious marriage feast—the eternal union of Christ and His bride, which is the church. And as Jesus passes this most blessed ordinance on to us, He commissions it to function among us as a rehearsal for a wedding celebration beyond all compare. Therefore, we see that Jesus was so eager to celebrate this supper because He was giving it to us as an enduring opportunity to experience and express the unparalleled joy that we will forever know as the ransomed bride our Savior loves, and cherishes, and redeems.

- Therefore, our practice of the Lord's Supper ought to paint a picture of this heavenly party.
 - At the wedding feast of Christ and His church, is there any possibility at all that the participants will be gloomy navel gazers who feel sorry for Jesus? No way!

- Do any of us imagine that anyone invited will be bored, or discouraged, or depressed? No chance!
- Is there any possibility that any of us dread our invitation to that party? Unthinkable!
- On the contrary, what does this feast look like in our passage?
 - v. 6 – Effusive praise of the Lord God Almighty
 - v. 7 – Rejoicing, gladness, the giving of glory to God
 - Therefore, when we celebrate the Lord’s Supper, let us sing songs of celebration and testify of God’s glory.
 - What a testimony to Christ our celebration can and should be!

With all that said, please hear this: This celebratory nature of the Lord’s Supper must never mean that we forget the cross. Rather, we understand that it is only because of the cross of Christ that there is any celebration at all. When we come to this table, we certainly still feel the pain of our Lord’s broken body, and we still taste the bitterness of the blood that He spilled for our ransom. His stunning sacrifice for us must always remind us of the terrible cost of our sins.

However, even as we concentrate upon the cross, should we not also be nourished by the bread and taste the sweetness of the cup, which testify to us that the body and blood of Christ have purchased for us a new covenant of everlasting life and exceeding joy? Should we not rejoice all the more to know that sin’s catastrophic curse had been conquered... the price of our perdition has been paid... and our debt is now forever deleted? Should we not celebrate all the more to know that, though we were wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, naked, and stained with sin, our heavenly groom redeems us completely and transforms us into His beautiful bride? You see, it is the severe price of our pardon that so magnifies our matchless joy.

Therefore, we eat the bread and drink the cup because, in so doing, we acknowledge that it is solely by the mercy of God through the atoning sacrifice of Christ that we have the unparalleled privilege to sit around this table and share in Christ’s victory. Because His body was broken for us and because His blood was poured out for our redemption, everyone who truly believes can proclaim together with Scripture, *“Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!”* Hear that again: *“Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!”*

- Have you accepted the invitation to come to Christ?
- If you are, are you thrilled about the invitation Christ offers?

- Are we excited about the Lord's Supper today? It is my prayer that we will increasingly become a congregation that is as eager to share this supper as our Lord was to inaugurate it.
- Fence the table.
 - If you have not given your life to Christ, then you are not at this moment part of the heavenly wedding feast this supper represents. We humbly ask, therefore, that you simply allow the elements to pass by, and we encourage you to seek the Lord while He may be found so that you will find yourself celebrating with Christ on the Day that He returns.
 - If you are in Christ, then come and celebrate the feast that awaits.