**Another Meal?
Matthew 26:26-29**

# Introduction

* a passage you've heard more than any other in lifetime. Next week again.
* Just another communion? Our struggle between retaining memorial and being fresh
* **NT history**: "*Breaking of the bread*" "*Lord's table*" - a meal!
	+ After resurrection, Emmaus disciples - a usual meal: "*blessed and broke it and gave it to them*" then immediately they recognised him and he disappeared (Luk 24:30 ESV) - (they had heart-burn after the meal!)
	+ **Act 2:42** "And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of the bread and the prayers." - a meal of the right kind of heart-burn.
* But being a meal, it became a problem in Corinth - significance lost, selfish attitudes and gluttony. Paul urging, *'eat at home'* then come, and do it *'decently and in order'*
	+ [apostles give very little directive in model - kind of bread, number of cups, process, regularity - open to culture and expedience. e.g. Wine. Leading. ((I'd like to freshen our observance, while maintaining all that's important))

# Read

# Pray

# FCF: 2 sides at one meal

* **26a**: "as they were **eating**" - cf **21a** also! ["eating"]
	+ A] the Passover meal (cf **17**).
		- to remember the exodus ( turn to Exodus ch12). Unleavened bread, slaughter of the lambs, blood painted for passing over.
		- **Read Ex12:14, 25, 40-42**
			* Reserved for people of Israel, i.e. in covenant with God
			* Such an important event, ... to become the beginning of their year.
* **Matt 26:21** "*as they were eating*", **v26** "*as they were eating*"
	+ - a hive of activity: reclining, eating, taking, blessing, giving, saying...but 2 parallel streams:
		- **v21ff** "... BETRAYAL"
		- **v26ff** "... FORGIVENSS" = and a future Kingdom

APP: 1st lesson - In one room, same activity, but opposite positions. .. Was Judas there for the 'communion meal'? Uncertain [cf Luk 22, John 13]. But the other disciples didn't see anything different - only Christ knew.

* Each week at the Lord's table, need for authentic faith reminded and spoken - but only each knows their heart.
* Well, if 'COMMUNION' feels like just a tradition, just another meal, **it's easy to 'despise' it**.Therefore this morning,

# Proposition

* **What does the Lord's Table mean** (how should we view it?).
* Along with your Baptism, it ought to be one of the most precious things we do!

# Firstly, The Lord's table Proclaims .. a New Covenant

* **read v26b-28**
* "*This is my body*". No Rabbi! It's the Passover!
* But that's why this last supper with Jesus is extremely significant. He is inaugurating a New Covenant. When I read the book of Hebrews I'm led to believe that at this meal, Jesus is actually REPLACING the observance of the Passover, with the observance of Jesus! (I don't think even Jews are still commanded to observe Passover!)
	+ **in Luk** 22:19 "This [bread] is my body, .... do this [event] **in remembrance of** [not Egypt but] **of *me***."
* Passover was a non-negotiable observance for all God's people for all time BECAUSE it was a COPY of (what Hebrews calls) the Heavenly Passover (Hebrews 8-9)
	+ 8:3 *For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; (5)...[but] They serve a* ***copy and shadow*** *of the heavenly things.*
	+ Therefore Christ - "mediator of the New Covenant" - replaces the shadow, which is the Passover feast, with Himself.
* **[ Exodus 12:40**  *The time that the people of Israel lived* ***in Egypt*** *was* ***430*** *years. At the end of 430 years, on that very day, all the [people] of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. It was a night of watching by the LORD, to bring them out of the land of Egypt;*]
	+ But the old Covenant under Moses was broken by Israel, and therefore from the time of Malachi, about 400 years BC, God seals up prophecy and revelation - a time of silence. Then Christ comes. And about 30 years later, after 430 years of Spiritual Slavery - there is "*a night of watching"*: Christ introduces the New Passover feast: One that will NOT be repeated every year - ...sufficient... once for all.
	+ This last supper on the Thursday evening, is the inauguration of the New Covenant between God and His people.
* [[ "This is my body" - (It's ridiculous that we even need to say this, but He isn't instructing his literal body to be eaten! RCC doctrine of transsubstantiation says when we eat the bread it becomes the literal skin and muscle of Jesus in our tummies. And therefore Jesus is being sacrificed again and again for sin. When He says, 'this is my body', is He holding His Body up? No, bread. And what do they eat? His body? No, the unleavened bread. Therefore the BREAD is a SYMBOL if His Body, which was about to be sacrificed to God, once for all]]
* **v27b-28a** "*My Blood*." - He has 3 things to say about it
	+ *of the covenant*
	+ *regarding many people*
	+ *poured out for the forgiveness of sins.*
* = a very specific covenant ('the'). Jesus is referring to **Jer 31:31-14** - you'll notice the same language Jeremiah predicted: the Covenant with Moses has failed, a New covenant is coming. Jesus is inaugurating the New Covenant promised.
	+ **READ**
* = The **blood** of Jesus was spilled, for a New **Covenant** with God - so that **anyone** who receives His sacrifice in faith ("regarding many people" - not all people) are **forgiven**, and enter into that covenant with God forever. Amen?
	+ [[ APP: Children: We don't impose an age restriction on communion, because the Bible doesn't give one. Like Baptism. But it is reserved for people with genuine faith in Christ. Parents, you are accountable for your children. Often, Baptism is a sign that a person is ready for the Lord's table]]
* **AN ILLUSTRATION**. Picture the Action: In this offer Jesus both commands and claims. CMD: *Take and eat*, CLAIM: *this is my body*. CMD: *Take and drink*, CLAIM: *this is my blood*. Now if I CMD you: "Take this" and CLAIM: "it is a Bar One voucher", you can't take it without simultaneously showing faith in what I'm saying. Because if you don't believe me, you don't want to look the fool. The **command** draws out of you an **expression** of inner **faith**, because it **requires** action. [Offer: when someone comes they are exercising faith]
	+ **That's why** He commands his disciples to take the bread and wine regularly - Not to perform a repeated sacrifice, but to change dormant, fickle faith into Living, active, Faith.
* *We need it*. Faith can degenerate into just thoughts - that's not faith.
* *We need it*. Taking the bread and cup is affirming VISIBLY in PHYSICAL REALM that we really DO believe in His covenant with us.
* *We need it*. But we need it to come from true faith - not like Judas, who may have eaten and drunk but still refused Him.

As a follower of Christ, there is nothing more relieving that the New Covenant we have with Him. **Hebrews 10:14-18**

14 For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified. 15 And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying,

 16 "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws on their hearts, and write them on their minds," 17 then he adds, "I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more."

 18 Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

* the final offering for sin has been made. For YOUR sin - every last one. Do you receive that? Will you show it - for your benefit, and the encouragement of others around you? Come next week and exercise faith!

Secondly,

# The Lord's Table Promises a New Kingdom

* I said there were 2 parallel streams: - look for the driving emphases
	+ **(21)** while eating, Truly I say
	+ **(26)** while eating... (29) Truly I say ... *I will not drink*!!
* contrast **(27)** *All of you, Drink from it*
	+ **(29)** But I certainly will not drink from it! ['again' = 'now']
* Why not?
	+ **Symbolically** - it is poured out for the forgiveness of sins, and He has no sin - makes no sense
	+ but...**Physically** - He is going away!
	and while the Disciples are Faithfully *remembering* His sacrifice - by drinking,
	He is Faithfully anticipating *reunion* with them - in abstinence - like a fast
		- ILLUS: Luke 5:35 34 And Jesus said to them, "Can you make wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? 35 The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in those days."
		- Support for our own fasting - even the communion meal is part of a fast - longing for the Bridegroom. But focus here is on Jesus Himself - He is fasting too!
* Remember last sermon, **v18**: the Desire of Christ? to be "*with my disciples*" - That day is coming, blood bought, sin cleansed bride of Christ brought to Him forever.
* The Lord's table Proclaims the New Covenant, and Promises a New Kingdom.

# Summary

* The Lord's table hugely significant! To remember the New Passover - Not a beginning of a calendar year, but beginning of New Life. "While they were eating": Truly ... it can be about betrayal or Betrothal! Let us eat and drink well.
**Read 1 Cor 11:23-26**