

## Message #106

## Luke 22:14-23

How would you respond if you were told you have 3 to 6 months to live? There was a psychiatrist named Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, who wrote over 20 books on the subject of death and dying. She became interested in how people responded when they were told they were going to die at the University of Chicago Hospital. She said in her book, *Questions and Answers on Death and Dying*, that there are 10 responses: 1) Shock; 2) Anger; 3) Tears; 4) Blame God; 5) Curse; 6) Bargain with God; 7) Depression; 8) Grief; 9) Denial; 10) Humor.

She said that she observed that these were the ways most people responded, when they were told they only had a short time to live.

The irony of all of this is that she had a series of strokes in 1995 that left her partially paralyzed. She would live until 2004. She spent her final days sitting in a chair, smoking cigarettes, watching TV and hateful of God. She died a bitter old woman.

Let's suppose you had only one night to live. You knew this was it. Today is your last day on earth. What would you do? How would you spend it? Who would you spend it with? How would you react? What would be your attitude?

Jesus Christ literally faced this. **When we come to this text, He literally knew this would be His last night on this earth before His death.** Being God, He could have spent this final night any way He wanted. All options were open to Him and for Him. He knew the exact moment He was going to die. He is controlling every bit of this.

- 1) He could have spent the night visiting with people in heaven in a second transfiguration.
- 2) He could have spent the night with the great O.T. saints—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, David, Solomon, Elijah, Daniel, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Jonah.
- 3) He could have spent the night with angels—Michael, Gabriel, Cherubim, Seraphim, all angels.
- 4) He could have spent the night with His family—His mother and brother were near.
- 5) He could have spent the night with great world leaders and convinced them not to kill Him.
- 6) He could have simply made a decision to live and not die the next day.

All of these were legitimate options for Jesus Christ. **But on His last night on earth, He decided to spend the evening with His disciples.** This group of men was far from perfect. One of the disciples was demonic and false and the other eleven were confused, unpolished and unstable. Christ chose to spend His final night on earth with this group of disciples.

What this teaches us is this:

**THE NIGHT BEFORE HIS DEATH, JESUS CHRIST SPENT HIS FINAL EVENING FELLOWSHIPPING WITH HIS APOSTLES.**

Christ chose this team and in spite of all of their failures and faults, He wanted to spend His final night with them. These disciples were weak, confused, ignorant and insensitive, but Jesus Christ loved them and wanted to spend His last hours on earth with them.

There are three fellowship parts to this final evening:

**PART #1** – What Jesus Christ did with His Apostles when the time came for Him to die. **22:14**

When the text says, “the hour had come,” it means that the hour of His death had arrived. We are in the final hours of Christ’s life on earth and He sat down to eat a meal with His Apostles.

The noun “Apostles” (oi apostoloi) is articular, “the Apostles” which means He is specifically spending this evening with the twelve who had been specifically chosen, commissioned and sent by Jesus Christ, Himself. There are no apostles today and those who claim to be apostles are either ignorant or arrogant or both.

Now Luke does not say why Jesus did this, but we do know of at least three Biblical reasons:

**Reason #1** - Because Jesus Christ loved His Apostles. **John 13:1**

In spite of their flaws, this was His team. He loved these men. He was the one who chose them. When you have been chosen by God and are part of His family, Jesus Christ longs to have intimate fellowship with you.

**Reason #2** - Because Jesus Christ wanted to instruct His Apostles. **John 13-17**

There were some final instructions that Jesus wanted to give to His Apostles before He left. There are many topics of instruction we glean from the Gospel of John:

- 1) The key to happiness is humble service. John 13:17
- 2) The key to exemplifying discipleship is love. John 13:35
- 3) The key to any relationship with God the Father is Jesus Christ. John 14:1-2
- 4) The key to demonstrating a love for Christ is obedience to the word of God. John 14:15
- 5) The key to bearing fruit is a close abiding relationship with Jesus Christ. John 15:1-10
- 6) The key guiding and helping Divine agent you will have in you will be the Holy Spirit.  
John 15:26-27; 16:7-13
- 7) The key to moving God to answer you is praying in My name. John 17:23-24

**Reason #3** - Because Jesus Christ wanted to prepare His Apostles. **John 16:2-4**

When Jesus Christ would die, His Apostles would not be popular. He wanted them to clearly understand that their ministry would not be one that would win them popularity contests. **He wanted them to really be cemented in the fact that only He can save a sinner.**

He wanted to prepare them for what they would experience. They would have a tough, lonely ministry and He wanted them to clearly understand this.

**PART #2** – What Jesus Christ said to His Apostles when it was time for Him to die. **22:15-22**

Luke really zeroes in on things Jesus said that night. In fact, you will notice that the word “said,” “say” or “saying” shows up six times (**22:15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20**). So Luke really zeroes in on the conversation. As we analyze this we learn that He is actually teaching His apostles some very important things. We may conclude that Jesus was still teaching and communicating the truth of God right up until the time He went to heaven.

There were four distinct messages that He gave His Apostles:

**Message #1** - Eating this Passover meal with you before I die is My desire. **22:15**

The Greek is emphatic here; stressing this was what Jesus Christ had a desire to do. It was very important to Him, Personally, to spend this final evening with them eating this meal.

According to Exodus 12:11, the Passover meal was to be eaten with a sense of urgency. When it was instituted, the children of Israel were to be dressed and ready to leave Egypt to live. The fact that these Apostles and Jesus are “reclining” indicates that Jesus is ready to lie down and die.

Now Jesus makes it clear here that he had a tremendous desire to eat this meal with His Apostles before He would suffer. It would be His suffering on the cross that would enable sinners to have a relationship with God and all Apostles were sinners.

Since Jesus was going to die for the sins of the whole world that would enable sinners to have a relationship with God, we certainly understand why you would want to spend the last meal with loyal sinners who have been with you all the way to this moment.

If you were one of these Apostles and Jesus said, “I earnestly desire to eat this last meal with you,” you could not help but feel special and important. It would make you feel welcome and needed.

Now this same desire Jesus had to fellowship with His Apostles is the same one He has for us. Revelation 3:20 says He has a desire to fellowship with us. His great longing is still to have a close relationship with His people.

**Message #2** - Eating this Passover meal with you will be My last meal. **22:16-18**

Jesus Christ makes it clear that He would never again eat a Passover meal, until His kingdom was established. So He ate the meal and then He took a cup of wine and He made it clear that He would not partake of any of this again until His kingdom was established and all fruit had been produced. Two times in this meal He took the cup of wine.

**Now of course one reason why He will not eat it until His kingdom is established is that He is the Passover (I Cor. 5:7).** The next time He eats this, all connected to Him will eat this and acknowledge this fact.

Now as we meet here today, it has been nearly 2,000 years since Jesus actually ate this meal and the Kingdom has not yet been established. One of the things that Jesus will do when He does establish His kingdom will be to eat a meal.

**Message #3** - Eating this Passover meal with you is My memorial meal. **22:19-20**

Now while He was eating this Passover meal, He decided to develop the meaning as it related to Him. There were two specific elements to this meal that Jesus wanted His disciples to remember: 1) There was the broken bread—which represents His body; 2) There was the cup of wine—which represents His shed blood.

Now Christ is very clear to point out that the two elements symbolized His broken body and His shed blood.

There is a critical prepositional phrase we do not want to overlook here. It occurs once in **verse 19** and once in **verse 20**. The phrase is “for you” (uper umwn). This is critical to the theology of what Jesus is teaching His own Apostles the night before He died.

**This prepositional phrase is important because Jesus is telling His own Apostles that I am taking your place.** My broken body and My shed blood is on your behalf, not mine. My sacrifice is over and beyond and above any other sacrifice that has ever been given and I am doing this for you. **My sacrifice is not only a substitutionary sacrifice, but a supreme sacrifice.**

Do not overlook the specific details of this. When it came to the bread before they partook, He gave thanks and then broke it. What Jesus is really doing here is thanking God for the sacrifice that He, Himself, was about to make with His own body that would save sinners. **The emphasis that every Biblical writer brings out is that Christ broke the bread before they partook of it (Matt. 26:26; 14:22; I Cor. 11:24).** Since every believer is indwelt by the Spirit of Christ, we have every believer break the bread before they partake.

It seems to me that in most communion services the emphasis is on eating the bread; but when we carefully study the Scriptures, the emphasis should be on breaking the bread.

After the bread, He took the cup of wine and gave thanks and they drank of it. Now we want to carefully point out something here that is important because this has been misinterpreted.

The cup does not actually become blood when you drink it any more than the bread becomes Christ’s body when you eat it.

In fact, it is against the Law of God to drink blood (Lev. 3:17; 7:26; Deut. 12:16, 23-25; 15:23; I Sam.14:32; I Chron. 11:15-19). There is no “magical transformation of substances” here.

The Catholic Church says the bread and wine actually change into the real body and blood of Jesus Christ (Transubstantiation). Many Lutherans teach the bread and wine features the real presence of Jesus in them (Consubstantiation). There is no support for either of these views here. The words cannot be clearer we are to “do this in remembrance” of what Christ did. This is a memorial that causes us to remember that His work on the cross is what saves us.

**This is a memorial that remembers the fact that it is only Christ’s work on the cross and what happened to His body and His shed blood that is the only thing that can save us.**

Christ’s sacrifice would open up a new covenant relationship that any sinner could have with God through His shed blood.

**Message #4** - Eating this Passover meal with you includes My betrayer. **22:21-22**

What a Savior and what a meal. But at this meal was a betrayer and Jesus Christ brings out three facts about him:

**(Fact #1)** - His betrayer was in the room and his hand was on the table. **22:21**

This is fascinating in Greek. Jesus is saying My betrayer is sitting in this room and his hand is on this table right now. The participle “betraying” is present active, which means the betraying was taking place at that very moment. Judas’ betrayal was well underway.

**(Fact #2)** - His betrayer was ordained by God to be His betrayer. **22:22a**

That word “determined” (orizw) means that God is the one who set the horizon boundaries of this entire event. God is the One who has sovereignly determined every bit of this. Jesus knows the betrayer and He knows He is supposed to be at this table for this specific time.

**(Fact #3)** - His betrayer will be condemned forever. **22:22b**

Jesus is fulfilling the entire salvific program of God, but “woe” to the one who betrays Him. When Jesus said “woe” to that one who was a betrayer, it is the worst judgment that can be pronounced on someone.

Even though God has sovereignly determined which Apostle is the traitor, the traitor is still responsible and accountable for his own choices and actions. **God’s sovereignty and God’s predestination never cancels out human responsibility and accountability.**

This is a great mystery of God. In order for Christ's body to be broken and His blood to be shed, Jesus has to die on that cross. In order for that to happen, Judas is part of the process of getting this to happen. Yet Judas would still be responsible for what he did.

**PART #3** – The Apostles responded to what Jesus just said. **22:23**

When the Apostles heard that one of them would betray Him, instead of them responding to the touching news of what He was about to do for them, they immediately focused on themselves.

It is obvious from this verse that Judas had remarkably hidden and concealed his true colors from all the other Apostles. They obviously had no idea who the traitor was. As Richard Lenski said, every apostle was "afraid of himself."

This was the group with whom Jesus Christ spent His final night. These guys are so insecure that they are debating which one of them could be the traitor.

Can you imagine spending your final night with guys like this? Can you imagine Jesus Christ spending His time with people like us?