

Introduction: The Night Before the Cross

Some of the most meaningful and memorable moments in life happen around a table. A meal shared before a departure, a final word before a journey, a conversation that changes everything. Luke 22 opens on a night just like that.

Yet, in the most unique way, the upper room becomes the stage for redemption's most sacred drama. Darkness surrounds Jerusalem. Betrayal is already in motion. Yet within those shadows, Jesus calmly arranges a meal that explains the cross before it happens.

The world may think of the Last Supper as a sentimental farewell, but Luke wants us to see something else. This is not the end of Jesus' ministry; it is the unveiling of its meaning. He is not the victim of betrayal but the sovereign Host preparing His own table. Every movement in this chapter teaches us that the grace of God is never reactive. Even when evil conspires, Christ reigns.

APP: How many endings has God's grace transformed into new beginnings for you?

TR: As the evening unfolds, Luke shifts our attention from the quiet intimacy of the upper room to the rising tension outside its walls. The same city preparing for Passover is at the same time plotting the death of the true Deliverer.

What was meant to celebrate freedom now becomes the backdrop for betrayal. Yet even here, God's plan moves forward. The story that began in Exodus with a lamb's blood on a doorpost will reach its fulfillment in the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

First: The Conspiracy Against Jesus. 1-6

Luke begins with an ominous note:

Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called the Passover. ² And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to put him to death, for they feared the people. ³ Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was of the number of the twelve. ⁴ He went

away and conferred with the chief priests and officers how he might betray him to them. ⁵ And they were glad, and agreed to give him money. ⁶ So he consented and sought an opportunity to betray him to them in the absence of a crowd.

a) Passover. 1-2

We all know what Passover is.

- It's the Jewish festival that commemorates God's deliverance of Israel from slavery in Egypt, as recorded in Exodus 12.
- On the night of their deliverance, the Israelites marked their doorposts with the blood of a lamb so that the angel of death would "pass over" their homes when judgment fell on Egypt's firstborn.
- The festival became a yearly remembrance of that decisive act of redemption.
- Through the Passover meal, Israel celebrated God's faithfulness, rehearsed the story of their liberation, and renewed their identity as His covenant people.
- Each element of the meal—the lamb, the unleavened bread, and the bitter herbs—served as a symbol of both suffering and salvation, binding each new generation to the history of God's mighty act of rescue.
- b) The Last Supper
- The Last Supper transforms the Passover by revealing its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus Christ.
- What had been a memorial of Israel's deliverance from Egypt became a new covenant meal celebrating God's deliverance from sin and death.
- This is what we recognized last week as we enjoyed the Lord's Table together.

At the traditional Passover table, Jesus took the familiar symbols, the bread and the wine, and gave them new meaning.

- 1 The unleavened bread, once a reminder of the haste with which Israel fled Egypt, became the sign of his body given for humanity.
- 2- The wine, once recalling the blood of the lamb that shielded Israel from judgment, became the sign of his own blood poured out for the forgiveness of sins.

In doing this, Jesus transformed the Passover from a remembrance of the first covenant to the inauguration of the new covenant promised by the Old Testament.

The Last Supper thus bridges the old and the new: it honors God's past act of redemption while revealing that its deepest meaning is found in Christ, the true Passover Lamb, whose sacrifice brings eternal freedom and fellowship with God.

- c) Betrayal. 3-6.
- Betrayal is always shocking because it strikes from the inside.
- Yet Luke does not present Satan or Judas as a being or man who ruins God's plan but as one who unknowingly fulfills it.
- Satan has already tried this, more than once, but in Eden, he attempted to use Adam to thwart God's plan. Look how

The Apostle Paul interprets this –

Romans 5:12 - Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men^[e] because all sinned...15-17 - But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. ¹⁶ And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. ¹⁷ For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ...19 - For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous

Evil plots, but Heaven rules.

The Passover, which once celebrated deliverance from Egypt, now becomes the setting for a greater deliverance.

Think of Joseph's story in Genesis 50:20: "You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good." The same principle shines here. The cross is the ultimate example of human treachery overruled by divine sovereignty.

App: You can trust God's plan even when life feels hijacked by human schemes. The unseen hand of providence is never surprised.

TR: While the priests plot in secret and Judas bargains in the shadows, Jesus is not caught off guard. He is already preparing a place for grace to be revealed.

Second: The Preparation for the Passover (vv. 7–13)

When the day of unleavened bread arrives, Jesus sends Peter and John to make ready the Passover. He gives specific, almost prophetic instructions: "When you enter the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him." Every detail is arranged.

This is no last-minute scramble.

- According to Paul, Jesus' death has been planned "before the foundation of the world" (Eph 1:4).
- The "child" has been "born. Now the "son" will be "given" (Isaiah 9:6).
- Evil men will crucify Jesus, but it is God's "definite plan" (Acts 2:23) that is being carried out.

Jesus is orchestrating the event that will point to His own sacrifice. The one who will be crucified tomorrow is in control today and tomorrow. The careful planning reminds us that nothing about our salvation was accidental.

In Exodus 12, God gave Israel precise directions for the first Passover meal. Now Jesus, the true Passover Lamb, issues the instructions Himself.

At this *final* Passover, Jesus is both the Host and the offering.

And yet, Jesus also tells the disciples, "And he will show you a large upper room furnished; prepare it there" (12).

GOSPEL: Do you see that? Jesus ensured the room is available. They prepare the meal. Christ has died on the cross for our sin. But just like in the Passover, Israel had to kill the lamb, paint its blood on the door posts and then get inside the house.

We must accept or refuse that sacrifice. No one can blame God for Hell. It is just retribution for refusing the only sacrifice God has prepared and offered.

App: When life feels uncertain, remember that the same Lord who prepared the Passover room has already ordered your steps. What looks like confusion to you is coordination to Him.

TR: The disciples find everything just as He said. The room is ready. The table is set. The Lamb is about to reveal the meaning of His mission.

Third: The Institution of the Lord's Supper. 14-23

And when the hour came, he reclined at table, and the apostles with him. ¹⁵ And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. ¹⁶ For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." ¹⁷ And he took a cup, and when he had

given thanks he said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves. ¹⁸ For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." ¹⁹ And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁰ And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. ²¹ But behold, the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table. ²² For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!" ²³ And they began to question one another, which of them it could be who was going to do this.

I'm so thankful we enjoyed communion last week so that we can reflect on it this week.

a) The Scene

There are many sacred moments in Scripture, events that turn our heads and twist our hearts. This scene is among the most sacred.

When the hour comes, Jesus reclines at the table and says, "I have earnestly desired to eat this <u>Passover</u> with you <u>before I suffer</u>." That statement pulses with love. He is not rushing toward death with grim obligation but longing to give His life for His friends.

He takes bread, gives thanks, breaks it, and says, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." Then He takes the cup and says, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood."

IMP: With those words, the meaning of the Passover meal shifts forever.

- What once remembered deliverance from Egypt now points to deliverance from sin.
- The old covenant written in stone gives way to the new covenant written on hearts.
- The Old Testament promised it, and here Jesus seals it.
- The lamb's blood on Israel's doorposts is now fulfilled in the Lamb of God whose shed blood on the cross saves us forever.

The Christ has come now. Promised before the dawn of time, prophesied by the prophets pictured throughout the Old Testament, Jesus has now appeared as both priest and sacrifice.

Hebrews 1:1–2 - Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son.

Hebrews 9:11–12 - But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent... he entered once for all into the holy places... by means of his own blood.

Hebrews 9:24–26 - For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself... But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself

Hebrews 10:1 - For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities

Hebrews 10:12 - But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.

Hebrews 10:20 - Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh

Excurses: For a moment, I want us to lift our eyes from that table and turn them to Heaven and listen to Peter reflecting on this moment –

1 Peter 1:10-12 – Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, ^{II} inquiring what person or time^[a] the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. ¹² It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

- * How confused were the angels then?
- * Did their mental gymnastics render them silent in those moments.
- * Those who had worshiped him from eternity past, who sang at his birth and ministered to him in the wilderness.
 - * Did they not look on in astonishment? In disbelief? In grief?
- & How could they watch in holy restraint as their loved Creator took the bread and said, "This bread is my body? This cup is my blood?"
- * Were they confused? Were they breathless? Did they long to intervene only to be held back by Heaven's own command?
 - b) The Betrayal

And then, to make matters worse, even at that sacred table, Jesus announces that one of his own disciples will betray Him. "But behold, the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table" (v 21).

The grace of Christ reaches even to the edge of treachery.

App: Think about the Lord's Table last week. It is the proclamation of His death and the promise of His return. Each time you eat and drink, you declare that His covenant love has cost him his life and endures forever toward you.

TR: The bread has been broken, the cup poured out, and redemption's plan has moved from symbol to substance, from shadow to flesh, from theoretical to real.

Fourth: The Meaning of the Meal

• Luke lets the quiet linger after the cup is shared. Jesus has spoken of His body, His blood, and His betrayal, yet His words are full of intent and compassion. "I have earnestly desired..."

Love compelled Him to the cross. The meal is not a farewell banquet; it is a covenant invitation. How?

This won't be the last meal Jesus eats with the disciples.

Turn and Read John 21:1-13 – This is the gospel encapsulated. The disciples have toiled all night to feed themselves but without any result. At Jesus' word, they cast their nets and catch so many fish they cannot haul them all in. But, it is all to no avail. Jesus had already prepared the meal.

V 9 - When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread.

Remember: The disciples prepared the Last Supper held at night. Jesus has prepared this breakfast at the dawn of a new day.

And what a new day it has ushered in –

V 18 - For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.

Revelation 19:6-7 - Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come..."

The Greek for "marriage" - *deipnon tou gamou* – literally means "wedding banquet." John announces it, but he does not describe it. He doesn't because Isaiah already has –

Isaiah 25:6-8 - On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined. And he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from

all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the LORD has spoken.

The first table looks back to the cross; the final table will look forward to glory.

Conclusion: The Sovereign Host

Friends, we are sitting at a unique table in all of human history this morning. Nothing ever or since has happened like it.

Yet, Luke 22:1–23 reveals a Messiah/Christ who is not trapped by events but who directs them. The religious leaders plot, Judas conspires, and yet every step follows the path He has directed and chosen.

John 10:18 - No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again

The same Jesus who prepared the Passover prepared your redemption.

The Lord's Supper is not a picture of defeat. It is a portrait of divine control and covenant grace. The Host still reigns, and His table still invites the weary.

APP: When your own life feels surrounded by shadows, when people fail you, or when you cannot see how God is working, look again at the upper room in Luke's Gospel. There sits the Savior who holds the cup of salvation and says, "*This is for you*."

Transition to Next Week: Next Sunday, Lord willing, we'll move from the table of humility to the test of true greatness, as Jesus teaches His disciples what it really means to lead and serve in His kingdom (vv. 24–38).



Observation – What does the text say?

- 1. What festival was approaching at the start of the chapter, and why were the chief priests and scribes seeking to kill Jesus? (vv. 1–2)
- 2. What did Satan do to Judas, and what arrangement did Judas make with the religious leaders? (vv. 3–6)
- 3. How did Jesus instruct Peter and John to prepare for the Passover meal? What details stand out in His directions? (vv. 7–13)
- 4. What did Jesus say as He sat down with His disciples at the table? (vv. 14–16)
- 5. What symbolic actions did Jesus take with the bread and cup, and what did He say each represented? (vv. 17–20)
- 6. What startling statement does Jesus make immediately after instituting the meal? (vv. 21–23).

Interpretation – What does it mean?

- 7. Why does Luke emphasize that this took place "during the Feast of Unleavened Bread" and "the Passover"?
- 8. What does Judas's betrayal reveal about human sin and divine sovereignty? (Consider vv. 3–6, 22.)
- 9. How does Jesus' careful preparation of the meal demonstrate that He is in complete control of the events leading to His death?
- 10. When Jesus says, "This is my body... this cup is the new covenant in my blood," what is He declaring about His identity and mission?
- 11. Why does Jesus call this His "last" meal until the kingdom of God comes? What hope does this hold for believers?

Correlation – How does this fit within the larger story of Scripture?

- 12. How does the first Passover in Exodus 12 help us understand the meaning of this final Passover meal with Jesus?
- 13. How does this passage connect to Hebrews 9:24–26, where Christ is both priest and sacrifice?
- 14. How does this scene anticipate the Marriage Supper of the Lamb in Revelation 19:6–9?

15. Compare Jesus' words here with 1 Corinthians 11:23–26. What continuity do you see between the Gospels and the early church's practice of communion?

16.

Application – How should this change us?

- 17. How does remembering Jesus' control over His betrayal and death strengthen your trust in Him when life feels chaotic?
- 18. When you take the Lord's Supper, how can you better meditate on both its cost (His sacrifice) and its promise (His return)?
- 19. What "hidden loyalties" or divided affections, like Judas', might the Spirit be calling you to surrender?
- 20. How did your participation in communion last week, and how might it in the future, renew your love for Christ and for His people?

A Word from Pastor Reggie

Friends, every Monday morning, (DV), I prepare a CG Leader Guide titled, "The View from My Study," to help CG leaders prepare to teach their CGs and lead discussion about the preaching text. It also includes a daily devotional enabling CG leaders to sit in the text for a week, get a 360° view of it and let it saturate their souls. It's what I call, 'digging a well' so that teaching becomes simply the overflow of God's experienced grace. So, my goal each Monday is two-fold: to disciple CG leaders in Bible study and to facilitate spiritual formation/ transformation as they study the text.

That Monday e-mail then becomes a blog and can be found on the Heritage website at https://www.hbcjc.org/blog so that all our members can benefit from its insights.

There are at least three explicit models for this large group/small group preaching/teaching philosophy in the Bible, One is found in Nehemiah 8. Will you take a moment to read this with me to better understand the biblical basis for how we conduct CGs at Heritage?

Nehemiah 8:1-4 - And all the people gathered as one man into the square before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses that the LORD had commanded Israel. ² So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could understand what they heard, on the first day of the seventh month. ³ And he read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law. ⁴ And Ezra the scribe stood on a wooden platform that they had made for the purpose. And beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah on his right hand, and Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam on his left hand. ⁵ And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was above all the people, and as he opened it all the people stood. ⁶ And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground. ⁷ Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah,

Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites, helped the people to understand the Law, while the people remained in their places. ⁸ They read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly, and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

After seventy years of captivity in Babylon, the Jewish exiles returned in three main waves: Zerubbabel (538 BC) led the first group, rebuilt the Temple (Ezra 1–6). Ezra (458 BC), a priest and scribe, restored the Law and worship (Ezra 7–10). Nehemiah (445 BC), a cupbearer to the Persian king Artaxerxes, rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 1–6). By the time we reach Nehemiah 8, both the Temple and the city walls have been completed. The physical restoration is done; now comes the spiritual restoration.

In In Nehemiah 8:1–2, "all the people gathered as one man in the square before the Water Gate" and asked Ezra to bring "the Book of the Law of Moses" (probably the Pentateuch - Genesis–Deuteronomy). This was not a discovery of a forgotten scroll (like in Josiah's day, 2 Kings 22), but rather a deliberate return to Scripture after decades of neglect and exile. The people themselves requested the reading, showing genuine spiritual thirst.

Ezra stood on a wooden platform built for the occasion, with other priests and Levites beside him (8:4–8). He read from early morning until midday. As he opened the book, the people stood, lifted their hands, said "Amen, Amen," bowed, and worshiped (8:5–6).

After his reading, Ezra sent 13 Levites, teaching priests, out among the congregation (8:7-8), to give small groups of people ("while the people remained in their places") the sense (this is what the Bible says) and "understanding," (this is what the Bible means) of the text he preached.

That friends, is not only <u>a biblical basis for CGs</u> but also <u>a biblical model for our for CGs</u>, at Heritage i.e., preaching and studying the same Bible text together in the sanctuary and small groups. It's a beneficial way for a church body to study the Bible together because <u>it is drawn directly from Scripture.</u>

So, the *The View from My Study* is intended to help CG leaders prepare to teach and lead the Sunday preaching text. It's also meant to give the Bible time to transform all of our lives. But all Heritage members can use it.

Then, the *Daily Devotion* that is attached to the weekly sermon notes sent to CG leaders is intended to help members, and CG leaders, practically apply the preaching/CG text the following week. Those sermon notes are sent to CG leaders every Thursday afternoon and can also be found on the Heritage website at https://www.hbcjc.org/study-notes.

Recently, I formulated a TRAP model for the *CG Leader Study Guide* that I am now applying to the *Daily Devotion*. The hope is that we can 'trap' the Word of God in our minds and hearts to that it becomes our life. As I mentioned to the CG leaders last week. TRAP stands for *Think, Reflect, Apply* and *Pray*. I truly believe that truth + time = transformation.

Using either the *CG Leader Study Guide* and/or the *Daily Devotion* will help reverse the curse, free you from the effects of the Fall and spiritually form you into the image of Christ, the most perfect and beautiful person ever to live. And isn't that in our best interests, as well as in the best interests of those we love and the whole world. That's because God's glory and our good are always synonymous.

The end of it all is to love God and our neighbor, fulfilling the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. Doing this together, will make Heritage a great church. (*Great Commandment + Great Commission = Great Church*).

Well friends, that is from my heart to yours. May God do what only God can do for, in and through us. I leave you with these words from our brother, Paul who writes,

"Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything" (2 Timothy 2:7)

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God" (Colossians 3:16).

"And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified" (Acts 20:32).



Mon, Nov 3rd The Plot Behind the Feast Read Read Luke 22:1–6

Think: As Jerusalem prepared for Passover celebrating God's deliverance from slavery, its leaders plotted the death of the true Deliverer. Luke tells us Satan entered Judas. Yet even this dark act moves within God's sovereign plan. What the enemy means for destruction, God weaves into redemption.

Reflect: Where do you see evidence that God remains in control of your life even when evil seems to advance?

Apply: Trust God's hand in hidden places. He reigns over both the feast and the plot.

Pray: Lord, when sin or sorrow seem to rule, remind me that You are never absent from the story.

Tues, Nov 4th The Lord Prepares His Table Read Luke 22:7–13

Think: Jesus sent Peter and John to prepare the Passover. Every detail from the man with the water jar, to the furnished upper room to shows that the Lamb already knows what must be done. Nothing surprises Him. He is the Master even in the hour of our greatest difficulty.

Reflect: How does Jesus' precise direction strengthen your confidence that He governs every circumstance of your life?

Apply: Rest in the truth that Christ prepares every "upper room" before you arrive.

Pray: Sovereign Savior, calm my anxious heart. Teach me to follow Your instructions with a trust that reflects who you are and my faith in you.

Wed, Nov 5th The Long-Awaited Meal. Read Luke 22:14–18

Think: "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." Those words reveal Christ's heart. Before the cross, He longs to share one last meal of love and promise. This table bridges centuries of hope from the lamb in Egypt to the Lamb of God now present and even to you in your world today.

Reflect: Why do you think Jesus longed so deeply for this meal? What does His longing teach you about His desire for fellowship with you, now and forever?

Apply: Draw near to Christ, who delights to draw near to you.

Pray: Jesus, thank You for desiring communion with sinners like me. Help me rest in your love and satisfy my heart with Your presence.

Thurs, Nov 6th The Bread and the Cup Read Luke 22:19–20

Think: Taking bread and cup, Jesus gives new meaning to ancient symbols. The bread is His body, the cup His blood, the new covenant in which forgiveness and fellowship are sealed forever. The shadow of Exodus becomes sighted substance in Him.

Reflect: When you receive the Lord's Supper, how consciously do you remember both His death and His promise to return?

Apply: Come to the table each time with repentance, gratitude, and hope.

Pray: Lord, thank You for giving Yourself completely. Help me never to take lightly what cost You so much.

Fri, Nov 7th The Betrayer at the Table Read Luke 22:21–23

Think: Even as Jesus offers His body and blood, a betrayer sits within reach. Yet He still serves, still loves, still gives Himself to his friends. Grace often shares the table with treachery. The Lamb is not caught off guard; yet He remains on mission with God's heart for the world.

Reflect: What does Jesus' response to Judas teach you about trusting God more than people?

Apply: (I think it is fair to say) Judas does not go to Heaven. But Jesus still treats him with kindness.

Pray: Lord, keep my heart from the bitterness of betrayal. Let my life reflect your heart for those who oppose the Gospel.