

The Promise of Life out of Death

Luke 22:7-20

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Tongue tied, confused mind, red faced, embarrassed may all be words that we express when we try to lead someone to Jesus. We are one month from Resurrection / Easter Sunday. During these coming weeks we will be looking at the last hours of Jesus' life. In each of the passages are promises Jesus made. Through these promises come the important things sinners need to know to be saved. These verses give us an opportunity to help lead someone to saving faith in Jesus.

We've spent the last two months discussing how to pray for sinners. We pray that they would see their sin. Our prayer is that the seeds of the Gospel of Jesus would be planted, watered and harvested in their lives. We pray that family, neighbors, and co-workers know that God wants to spend eternity with them, because He loves them.

We can turn conversations to spiritual issues because we have been given the ministry of reconciliation. Every person who believes in Jesus is given a new life. God is the God of second chances. Sinners don't need their sin pounded into them, but when they see their sin we can talk about God's grace in our own lives. Everyone has sinned and Jesus sees our sin and He love us, died for us, and rose from the dead to forgive and empower us forever and ever.

Now the Festival of Unleavened Bread arrived, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed. Jesus sent Peter and John ahead and said, "Go and prepare the Passover meal, so we can eat it together." "Where do you want us to prepare it?" they asked him. He replied, "As soon as you enter Jerusalem, a man carrying a pitcher of water will meet you. Follow him. At the house he enters, say to the owner, 'The Teacher asks: Where is the guest room where I can eat the Passover meal with my disciples?' He will take you upstairs to a large room that is already set up. That is where you should prepare our meal." They went off to the city and found everything just as Jesus had said, and they prepared the Passover meal there. When the time came, Jesus and the apostles sat down together at the table. Jesus said, "I have been very eager to eat this Passover meal with you before my suffering begins. For I tell you now that I won't eat this meal again until its meaning is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God." Then he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. Then he said, "Take this and share it among yourselves. For I will not drink wine again until the Kingdom of God has come." He took some bread and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." After supper he took another cup of wine and said, "This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood, which is poured out as a sacrifice for you. Luke 22:7–20 (NLT)

Jesus shared His Last Supper to say His body and His blood will save us. Jesus sat down with His disciples to share in a meal that was over 2000 years old. From the days of Moses and the people living as slaves in Egypt comes this meal. It is still practiced today by those who are Jews. They remember the faithfulness of God. They remember God's willingness to save them. They remember agreeing to follow all of God's commands.

The people were slaves for four hundred years and were broken in spirit, in mind, and some in body. God's deliverance was much anticipated and eagerly expected. But after four hundred years many thought it would never happen. When this moment came the people would never forget. The day God set His people free each family was to kill a lamb and put its blood on the door posts of their homes. As the angel of death came to take the first born son in each family, this was a sign to pass over that home.

Year after year the Jewish people gather to share the details of this meal. Every part of the meal has specific meaning to their salvation from slavery in Egypt. They held this meal as holy, unlike another meal. This time together was sacred, with reverence. The meal consisted of the lamb that was killed, whose blood was put on the doorposts. There was unleavened bread, or bread that didn't rise, because it was made quickly. They ate bitter herbs to remind them of the years of slavery. Included in the meal was a sweet dish made from dates.

They broke the bread and shared the story of Moses. They drank wine from the cup and said prayers of thanksgiving. They ate the meal and prayed prayers of supplication for themselves. They offered petitions for others who were oppressed.

Jesus changed the meal from one of remembrance of Moses and freedom from slavery in Egypt to a meal of remembrance for sins forgiven. Jesus became the Lamb of God, killed to save all who believe. His broken body was given instead of ours. His blood was shed instead of ours. His life sacrificed instead of ours. Jesus set free from slavery to sin all those who believe. We remember His body broken with our sins.

We remember His blood shed for our sins. We remember that our sins have been taken away by His sacrifice. We remember Jesus as our Savior and Lord. Anyone who gives their sins to Jesus, turning away from their sin toward Jesus can celebrate this meal. It is sacred and holy. It is more than bread and a cup. It is remembering Jesus took away your sins.

Luke 22:19 (NLT) He took some bread and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

The broken body of Jesus is the weight of our sins. Jesus lived His life completely faithful to God. Jesus kept all Ten of the Commandments. Jesus kept all the Law given to Moses. Jesus lived His without ever sinning against God, Himself, or another person.

He was doing more than following rules. He was doing more than following all the rituals. Jesus lived His life faithfully following God's commands, being obedient because He loved God the Father. Jesus wanted to honor the Father in Heaven with His life, His thoughts, His words, His actions. Everything He did was to glorify the Father in Heaven.

There was no reason for Him to be punished for sin. He never lied, cheated, or stole. He never spoke words of slander. He never thought words of destruction toward another person. Jesus had no sin. But, Jesus carried the sin of the world.

Jesus said His body was given for them. The lamb that was killed two thousand years before was given for the people to be set free. That lamb was without blemish, it was perfect. It was innocent of any wrong doing. Jesus' body was given to set free all those who believe in Him.

Jesus' body carried the sins of you and me. The sin of every murdered, child molester, and rapist was on Jesus. The sin of all those who lie, cheat and steal, their sin was on Jesus. The sins of those who deny Jesus, betray Jesus, and reject Jesus was on Him. The sins of those who fail to recognize Him as God's Son was on Jesus. He gave His body for all my sins and all of your sins from the past and the present and the future. Instead of each one of us carrying our sins against Jesus, He carried them Himself. This is the greatest sacrifice anyone can make. Jesus' body became my sin and your sin.

This weight crushes us, it crushes every human being. There is no person, except Jesus has isn't crushed by their sins. Sin that isn't confessed grows in weight. When we don't repent of our sins the weight gets heavier and heavier. We need Jesus to carry our sins.

Jesus said His blood was a new covenant with God and His people. For all those who believe, Jesus became their sin to take away the punish of their sin, Jesus blood covers their sin. The blood of the lamb spread over the doorpost at the first Passover covered the people from death. Jesus' blood shed on the cross covers every believer from death, eternal separation from God. Jesus has done for all those who believe in Him what the lambs did for the people held in Egyptian slavery.

There is nothing I can do about my sin. The lies I've told, the denials about Jesus, my own selfishness can only be carried by Jesus and covered by His blood. The only respond for me is to either reject what Jesus has done or to believe it. The only respond you have is to either reject the salvation of Jesus or to embrace Him as your salvation. The response to Jesus becoming your sin and covering it with His blood is to trust Jesus.

Luke 22:20 (NLT) After supper he took another cup of wine and said, "This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood, which is poured out as a sacrifice for you."

The covenant is God's willingness to forgive our sins and our willingness to repent. A covenant is an agreement. We enter into agreements throughout our lives. We sign our name on a document and the bank gives us money for a house. Those of us who are married are in a covenant with our spouse. In a covenant each person agrees to do something. With the bank they agree to give me the money and I agree to pay it back with interest. In my marriage covenant I agree to love my wife and she agrees to love me. There are no excuses or exceptions, we agree to love one another.

God is willing to forgive us of our sins. God does not need to forgive us. God is not obligated to forgive us. God is ready to forgive our sins. We could even go so far as to say that God is eager to forgive our sins. God created you in your mother's womb and wants to spend eternity with you. God has no desire to punish you for your sins. God has every reason to redeem you from your rebellion, rejection, selfishness. We are blessed that we are loved even though we don't deserve it.

In this covenant we need to do one thing. We do this one thing for the rest of our lives. We agree to turn away from our sins by turning to Jesus. This one thing is the one thing we have not been able to do all of our lives. We can't turn away from our sins on our own. We need to God's help, we need the help of God's Holy Spirit, we need Jesus' help.

Jesus is carrying your sin in His body. Jesus is sacrificing His blood to cover your sin. You need to be willing to give up your sin. You need to be willing to hand over to Jesus your sinful thoughts. You need to be willing to hand over to Jesus your hatred, your revenge, your selfishness. Whatever keeps

you from trusting God, be willing to give it to Jesus. Whatever drags you into sin, give it to Jesus. Whatever makes you disobedient, unfaithful, give it to Jesus.

Simply, honestly, genuinely, with gratitude and thanksgiving hand your sins to Jesus. Ask Him to fill your life with His thoughts, His attitudes, His actions. If you are entering this covenant to get something from God, you aren't being sincere or honest. You're still holding onto your own desires and wishes. You're not willing to be forgiven.

This covenant is not equal, Jesus died for your sins. He asks you to repent of your sins and live for Him. The only thing you can do to be saved is to be willing to let Jesus enter your life.

Luke 22:20 (NLT) After supper he took another cup of wine and said, "This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood, which is poured out as a sacrifice for you.

The question is do you believe the blood of Jesus takes away your sins? In our conversations with family, neighbors, co-workers the Holy Spirit may open the door for you to ask this question. You have planted the seed of the Gospel. For hours, days, maybe even years you have watered that seed. It's possible that another Christian planted and watered the seed. But the door has been opened by the Holy Spirit and you will have the opportunity to ask the question, do you believe the blood of Jesus has taken away your sins?

You will have the opportunity to talk about the bread and the cup, the body of Jesus and His blood. Through all of this conversation, through the time watering the seed you have shared how God's grace has changed your life. You have lived for Jesus and when you have failed you have asked for mercy, and been honest with others. Those who have watched you have seen the hope and peace of Jesus in your life. They have witnessed power and the grace of God at work through you. The moment has arrived. The Holy Spirit has prompted you to ask the question, do you believe? The Holy Spirit is opening your mouth and through your lips comes His words.

Do you believe the blood of Jesus takes away your sins? You can be free of the guilt sin has placed on your soul. That is the heaviness you fill through every situation in life. You can be free of the power that drags you back into the same sins day after day. You've never had control of your life, your thoughts, your actions.

You can be free to live with hope. You can be at peace. You can begin to see God's finger on your life. You can begin to experience the unconditional love of God.

Make this simple and straightforward. In your own words tell Jesus you have sinned. Share with Him that you believe He has taken away your sins. Express to Him your gratitude for His mercy, grace, love and power. Speak the desire of your heart that you want Him to take over every thought, word, and action.

In the silence of the next moment you speak to Jesus. Then I will pray with you.