

UNTIL I DRINK IT ANEW IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD – MARK 14:22-25

PREACHED BY PASTOR COLIN RIEKE ~ APRIL 2, 2015

²² While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take it; this is my body.”

²³ Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank from it.

²⁴ “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many,” he said to them. ²⁵ “Truly I tell you, I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.”



This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it,

It took three years to complete. To this day, it is the most popular piece of Christian art in the world, with its image being found on carpets, carvings, canvas, and practically any other medium imaginable. With lifelike facial expressions that depict emotions unable to be captured by its contemporaries, the 15 x 29 foot painting became an instant masterpiece of design and characterization. It's the painting we call *The Last Supper*.

Did you know that basically from the time it was completed in 1498, it started to fall apart? Leonardo da Vinci, always the inventor, tried using new materials for this mural. Instead of using the customary wet plaster, he thought he'd give dry plaster a whirl. What worked artistically did not work so well in regards to durability. Almost immediately it began to flake off the wall, and people have been attempting to restore the original ever since. *The Last Supper* isn't so lasting.

I Tell You the Truth . . . Until I Drink It Anew in the Kingdom of God

I. Cherish the blessings of the past

II. Enjoy the blessings of the present

III. Look forward to the blessings of the future

I.

Tonight is Maundy Thursday. It's a special night of Holy Week in which we transport ourselves back to the upper room, the original scene of *the Last Supper*. This was a night that Jesus had eagerly looked forward to as he was going to have the opportunity to celebrate the Passover with his disciples. It would have started off with reviewing the history of God's grace, particularly remembering how God used lamb's blood painted on doorframes to keep his people safe as the angel of death passed over Egypt. They would have then recalled how God led the people of Israel out of the land of slavery with a pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night. Finally, the celebrants would have listened with eyes wide open as the teacher of the group relayed the story of the Red Sea being parted, allowing God's people to pass through to safety, only to have those walled waters come crashing down on the pursuing enemies. As the disciples ate this meal and listened intently, they felt a connection to their

past. They felt a connection to God, as they were his people. They felt a connection to one another, as this family history belonged to each one of them. It certainly was a special night, the most special night of the year.

II.

Just when the disciples thought it couldn't get any better or more significant, Jesus went on to make the occasion more special. While they were eating, Jesus took the unleavened bread, which was part of the original Passover menu, and they heard him say, *"This is my body."* Then he took the cup, offered it to them, and said, *"This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many."* Jesus' words made it very clear that this New Testament Supper with his disciples was something very special. No doubt, they didn't want it to end. They wanted the Last Supper to last.

But Jesus, as eager as he was to celebrate this meal with them, didn't want it to last. He knew it couldn't last. His ultimate goal was not to dine with his disciples at the Last Supper, but his goal is to dine with all of us at a lasting supper. So once again, he grabs our attention: *"I tell you the truth." "I tell you the truth, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine."* In other words, I need to leave. If my body and my blood are going to be given and poured for you, I need to do just that. I can't enjoy this meal with you any longer, *"until that day when I drink it anew in the kingdom of God."*

If there was a word for the disciples to lean on in that upper room, it was that preposition: "until." It is a word of promise. It is a word of hope. So much of this night was wrapped up in the past, as they celebrated God's grace and deliverance of his Old Testament people from Egypt. So much of this night was wrapped up in the present, as Jesus made the Last Supper the Lord's Supper, emphatically declaring, *"This is my body and this is my blood which is being poured out for you."* Jesus' suffering was already at hand. But neither the emphasis on God's past deliverance nor his present offering of himself as the Passover Lamb would have meant a lick if there wasn't a future. And the future was there in that little word, "until."

III.

It's that word, "until," that we lean on tonight as well. We are about to celebrate an awesome supper. Through the Lord's Supper, Jesus invites us to look back. As we come to this table tonight, Jesus wants us to eat and drink in remembrance of him, recalling and proclaiming his death. Before we come to this table tonight, Jesus wants us to look in as we examine ourselves. With the stethoscope of God's law on our hearts, the diagnosis of our self-examination will be that we are guilty of sinning against God and that we deserve his punishment. As we come to this table tonight, Jesus wants us to look around and appreciate the blessing of unity we have with those who stand (or kneel) at our side receiving his body and his blood. Look around and appreciate that *"we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf"* (1 Co 10:17). But above all else, above looking back, above looking in, above looking around, as we come to this table and as we leave this table, our Savior invites us to look forward. Look forward until that day when *he drinks it anew with us in the kingdom of God.*

I don't say that to downplay the tremendous blessing we receive tonight. Jesus, as testified by his own words and promise, is miraculously present in this meal tonight. He is here, attaching himself in, with, and under these earthly elements through his Word. As we receive his body and his blood, he's

offering to us the forgiveness of sins that only comes through the gospel. Enjoy this meal tonight. Hear the words spoken so many years ago, spoken again to you personally by your Savior, “Take and eat, this is my body, given for you. Take and drink, this is my blood, shed for you.” Savor this meal tonight and every time you come to the Lord’s Supper. But do so knowing that our Savior’s goal is not simply to dine with us like he did with his disciples at the Last Supper. No, he gave his body and blood so that we could have reservations with him at a lasting supper—a lasting supper where he eats and drinks with us anew in the kingdom of God.

What that heavenly banquet exactly looks like, feels like, or tastes like, I don’t know. But it will be new. New in quality. New like something we’ve never experienced before. No longer will we have to look in and examine ourselves for sin because we’ll be confirmed in holiness, wearing white robes of righteousness that were tailored by the blood of Jesus. No longer will we have to look around and be saddened that we can’t share this feast with everybody, because in heaven there will be perfect unity. No longer will Jesus be with us only sacramentally; he will be with us visibly, as we see our Savior face-to-face. No longer will we need to look ahead, because what is now in the future tense will then be present reality, reality that is breathtaking, filled with overwhelming joy that will never end. It will be a lasting supper. That’s why

At the Lamb’s high feast we sing
Praise to our victorious King,
Who has washed us in the tide
Flowing from his pierced side. Alleluia! Amen. (CW 141:1)