

**Mark 14:22-25 I Will Drink the Cup Anew with You in the Kingdom of God! Maundy Thursday**  
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God's grace and peace are yours from Jesus Christ who promises us forgiveness through His Supper! Amen  
We hear Jesus' familiar words in Mark 14:22-25

This is Your Word heavenly Father to make us certain of Your forgiveness in Christ. Your Word is truth.

Dear Christian Friends,

It took nearly three years for a work of art to be completed. To this day, it is one of the most recognized Christian pictures in the world, with its image found on carpets, carvings, canvas, and just about anything else. With life-like facial expressions that depict emotions unable to be captured by anyone else of his time, the 15 x 29 foot painting became an instant masterpiece. The painting is called *The Last Supper*. Did you know that from the time it was completed in 1498, it has been falling apart? Leonardo da Vinci, always the inventor, tried using new materials for this mural. Instead of using the customary wet plaster, he used dry plaster. It worked well artistically, but not so well for durability. Almost immediately it began to flake off the wall, and experts have been attempting to restore the original ever since. The Last Supper mural isn't very lasting. But Jesus' words on Maundy Thursday are:

**I Tell You the Truth . . . I Will Drink the Cup Anew with You in the Kingdom of God!**

**First, cherish the blessings of the past.** Maundy Thursday is a special night of Holy Week which takes us back to the upper room where Jesus celebrated the Last Supper. This was a night that Jesus had eagerly looked forward to as he was going to have a last opportunity to celebrate the Passover with His disciples before His death. The evening began with reviewing the history of God's grace to His people: how God had used lamb's blood on doorframes to save His people from the angel of death and how God led the people of Israel out of slavery in Egypt with a pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night.

Finally, the Passover celebrants would have listened as Jesus told the lesson of the Red Sea parting, saving God's people but destroying the pursuing enemies in a flood. As the disciples ate this meal and listened, they felt a connection to the past. God had saved their ancestors. They all were part of one extended family of Israel since this history belonged to each of them. It certainly was a most special night of the year!

On this Maundy Thursday, as we celebrate the Lord's Supper, we too remember the past. Jesus said: "*Do this in remembrance of Me.*" (Luke 22:19) What are we to remember? "*We proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.*" (1 Corinthians 11:26) His body was sacrificed on the cross to pay for our sins. His blood was poured out as an offering to take away God's judgment against us. Every time we receive the Last Supper, we remember the sacrifice Jesus made for us.

**Second, enjoy the blessings of the present.** The disciples must have looked back on that last Passover meal with Jesus with thankfulness. But, Jesus went on to make the occasion one that they would never forget. While they were eating, Jesus took the unleavened bread and said, "*This is my body.*" (v.22) Then he took the cup of wine, offered it to them, and said, "*This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.*" (v.24) Jesus' words made it clear that this New Covenant supper with his disciples was more than a meal. No doubt, they wanted the Last Supper to never end.

But Jesus, as eager as he was to celebrate this meal with them, knew that the meal couldn't last. His goal was not to dine with His disciples temporarily, but it was to win salvation forever. So, we feast on His meal tonight to be refreshed in His forgiveness. We hear the words spoken to us by Jesus, "*Take and eat, this is my body, given for you. Take and drink, this is my blood, shed for you.*" (Luke 22) When we hear Jesus speak of His body sacrificed and His blood poured out for us, His words and the Sacrament strengthen our faith in Him.

Through His shed blood we are living under His New Covenant. We no longer need to make sacrifices. We don't need a temple in Jerusalem. We don't need priests to intercede for us. Jesus is all we need. His sacrifice takes away our sin. Instead of meeting at a temple, God meets us wherever His Word and the Sacraments are used in spirit and in truth. (John 4) Jesus Himself is interceding for us at every moment and day! Just as He enjoyed the fellowship of His disciples at that Last Supper, so as we come to His table tonight we are in fellowship with Him and also we have the blessing of fellowship with each other. We look around and thank Jesus that "*we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.*" (1 Corinthians 10:17)

**Third, in the Last Supper we anticipate future blessings!** Jesus promised His disciples, "*I tell you the truth, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew in the kingdom of God.*" (v.25) The words "*until that day*" give us hope. The Bible tells us before coming to His Supper that we are to examine our lives. With the scan of God's law on our hearts, the diagnosis is that we are guilty of sinning against God and that we deserve punishment. We come to Jesus' table as sinners, but we'll leave forgiven by Jesus Himself. Our future couldn't look better in Christ. At His Supper, our Savior invites us to look forward to the day when He drinks the cup anew with us in His heavenly kingdom. Jesus used the word "cup" to describe the contents. In the Lord's Supper the cup contained wine. Jesus later said that He was going to drink the cup of suffering to pay for the sins of the world. And He looked to the future when we will drink the cup of salvation with Him in heaven.

We don't want to overlook the blessings we receive tonight. Jesus, by His own word and promise, is miraculously present for us to receive in His Supper. Through His Word, He is present in, with, and under the elements of bread and wine. In His body and blood, He's offering to us the forgiveness of sins that He won by His sacrifice. 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 once like He did with His disciples at the Last Supper. His Last Supper prepares us to join Him at His heavenly table, where "*He eats and drinks with us anew in the kingdom of God.*" (v.25)

What that heavenly banquet exactly looks or tastes like, we don't know. But it will be a new quality, new like something we've never had before. No longer will we have to look at our past sins because in heaven we will be holy, wearing white robes of righteousness cleansed by the blood of Jesus. No longer will we have to look around and be saddened that we can't share this Supper with some who are far away or are no longer on earth with us, because in heaven all believers will be gathered in perfect unity. No longer will Jesus need to come to us in the Sacrament. We will see Him face-to-face. No longer will we need to look with hope to the future, because that future will become a reality that fills us with joy that will never end.

That's why we can sing: "The death of Jesus Christ, our Lord, we celebrate with one accord; It is our comfort in distress, our hearts' sweet joy and happiness." "A precious food is this indeed- It never fails us in our need- A heavenly Manna for our soul Until we reach our heavenly goal." (ELH No. 329 vs. 1, 5) Amen.