

# A Look Forward

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[0:00] The Lord's Supper is a giant road sign. It's a giant road sign that points in two directions. There are opposite directions.

One is back into history, to the cross of Jesus Christ. It points back to the death of our Passover lamb.

We do this tonight in remembrance of him. It also points forward to the future, into the future, to the completion of our salvation when the kingdom of God comes in power.

It points forward to another supper, a better supper, the marriage supper of the lamb. And it's this pointing forward that we want to look at and focus our attention on this evening.

Turn with me in your Bibles to Luke 22. Luke 22. Let's read a few verses, beginning in verse 14.

[1:09] Luke 22, verse 14. When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table.

And he said to them, I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.

And after taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, Take this and divide it among you. For I tell you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.

The Lord's Supper points forward. And Jesus Christ makes the connection here himself. Two times in this short little passage that I read, Jesus says, I'm not going to eat this bread.

I am not going to drink this cup again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God. If something needs fulfilled, it needs perfected.

[2:21] It needs completed. It needs to be brought about. It's not finished yet. The story is not completely over. It's waiting to be perfected.

So suppose that you've been married for 24 years. And in the coming year, you'll reach your 25th anniversary. And after 25 years, you want to celebrate.

So you with your spouse decide that you're going to go on a cruise. And you start looking on the internet. You want to see all the cruises available. And this is a pretty big occasion, 25 years.

And so you decide that you're going to go all out. You're going to cruise the Mediterranean. So you go down to your travel agent. And you pick up some brochures.

And night and day, you look at these brochures. You're sitting in bed, and you're looking at them, dreaming of the day. You picture yourself sailing on beautiful, clear waters.

[3:23] And you imagine yourself looking at the colossal pyramids. Wow, that's going to be amazing, you say. And then you picture yourself winding through the narrow streets of Athens, arm in arm, with your lover.

And it's sweet. It is sweet to think about. You talk about it with your spouse. You plan it. You think about it. You daydream about it.

The anticipation is delicious. But then, your desire is fulfilled. You finally board the ship.

And you sail on those crystal clear waters. And you stare up at those massive pyramids. And you wind through the narrow streets of Athens. And you say, the brochures were good.

But this is a lot better. The brochures were good. They were beautiful. But they didn't do justice to this. This is better than anything that I could have ever thought or imagined.

[4:30] Now, the brochures are wonderful. The daydreaming is good. But it's so much better when you see it all in person, when your desires are fulfilled. Or you can think about it in a different way.

Here you have two young people. And they're not married yet. They began dating each other. And one date leads to another date. And as it happens so often, they realize that they really like each other.

And so they keep dating. And then, it's good. It's nice. It's wonderful. But then they want to go to the next level.

And so, what happens? The man goes with his friends for moral support. And he goes and buys something he probably can't afford. And one starry night, he gets down on one knee and he asks that girl, will you marry me?

And she says, yes. Now they're engaged. They say, this one is the one for me. And the other one says, this one is the one for me. And they start spending more time together.

[5:37] They're never apart. They're always with each other. It's good. It's grand. It's wonderful. But is that all it can be? No.

The engagement is awaiting fulfillment. The relationship is good, but it's not all that it can be. Only when they say, I do, has their relationship been fulfilled.

Only after they begin living as man and wife, has that relationship been perfected. It's been taken to the highest level. Well, the dating is good. The engagement is better.

But the marriage is the fulfillment, the perfection, the fruition of their relationship. Now, fulfillment is something like that. It means that something needs perfected.

It's the perfection of something if something is fulfilled. But it also means that some things stay the same. Right? There is a similarity. There is an underlying truth between those brochures and then actually seeing the pyramids and seeing Athens.

[6:43] And the love that the couple shares when they're dating and then when they're engaged and then when they're married, it's the same love. It's the same bond. With fulfillment, things change.

Things get better. But some things stay the same. It's like chocolate chip cookie dough. You probably like chocolate chip cookie dough. It has all the ingredients of chocolate chip cookies. But chocolate chip cookies are not perfected until you put them in the oven and they bake and then they're done. They improve, maybe. They improve, but they stay the same.

And that is something like what Jesus is talking about here. This meal, this Lord's Supper that we're taking part in tonight, it's not the end of the story.

There's coming a day when this meal will be fulfilled. It will be perfected. It will give way to something much better than what we're enjoying now. Now, there's nothing wrong with the Lord's Supper.

[7:46] There's nothing wrong with the brochures. There's nothing wrong with being engaged. There's great joy here. It's real. It is real what we are going to do today.

But it's not the end of the story. The end of the story comes when the kingdom of God comes. The final fulfillment is when Jesus will eat with us and drink again with us in the kingdom of God.

Now, what is Jesus talking about? What is the fulfillment that he's talking about? He, I think, is talking about the wedding feast of the Lamb or the wedding banquet that will come when all of God's people are all together and then they will really finally celebrate the Lord's death and resurrection in the way that it should be celebrated.

So, when God's people have been finally and completely saved when judgment has passed and the bridegroom has come and fetched the bride then begins the wedding.

Then begins the wedding feast. And the bride, that's us, we will be arrayed in glorious garments and glorious robes and the bridegroom will be radiant and we will see him in his glory.

[9:11] And there will be nothing to do except to enjoy one another. Now, Revelation refers to this. In Revelation 19, you don't have to turn there, listen to what it says.

Hallelujah, for our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory for the wedding of the Lamb has come and his bride has made herself ready.

Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear. Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints. Then the angel said to me, Write, Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb.

So, did you notice how that praise began? It began with these words, Hallelujah, for the Lord God Almighty reigns. The kingdom of God has come and it's come in full glory and full power and it's only when the kingdom comes in fullness will the wedding begin.

When the kingdom of God comes, it's then that this supper that we are taking part of will be fulfilled as Jesus said. This supper points to that more glorious supper.

[10:24] The Lord's supper says, Enjoy this. Enjoy this. This is real. This is meaningful what we are doing tonight. But, there's something better coming.

There's something better for you. And it's that day. Why will it be better? Why will it be better? Why will it be better to celebrate the Lord's death then, than it is now?

Well, first of all, all of God's people will be there. All of God's people will be there with us. So, this is a meal that we're enjoying tonight.

And it's a meal that we're going to eat with very, very few of God's people. And we enjoy fellowship with one another. We have communion with a few of God's saints this evening.

And it is real. It's real fellowship. It's sweet fellowship. But it will be better then because there'll be all of us together. Even tonight, there's some in our body that can't be here.

[11:29] That can't be here. They're unable to leave their homes. They're sick. They're in nursing homes. They can't come and be with us. Others can't be here because they've already passed into glory.

Men who sat next to their wives, who took the Lord's Supper with them, are now gone. And there's an empty seat and a sad heart.

and we want to be with them. And we eat this meal with our brothers and our sisters, but we don't eat it with our dearest friend anymore.

And so there's joy here. There is joy, but there is sadness. Many of us have lost friends. Friends that we loved and that we still love.

And we've lost parents that taught us about Jesus when we were still on their knee from infancy. And we used to go up to the house of the Lord with them and we used to rejoice and enjoy being with them.

[12:36] But now we're separated. They are gone and we are still here. And there are holes in our hearts that time cannot fill.

That no matter how long we go, it still is there. So there's joy here tonight. There's joy, but there's still sadness because we aren't complete.

And this meal points to the day and it points ahead and it says there's a better supper coming.

There's a fulfillment coming. And you will eat and you will drink and you will rejoice in what Jesus Christ did on the cross in his death with all of your loved ones who knew the Lord.

There'll be no empty seats on that day. There'll be no sad hearts on that day because every single one of God's children will be there with us. And can you imagine it?

All of God's people from all of time will be there. Every single saint from every single age. Adam and Eve will be there. Joseph and Mary will be there.

[13:46] Martin and Katie Luther will be there. Your mom, your dad, will be there. Everyone will be there and no one will be missing. No one will be missing.

And we will eat with Ruth and Boaz and Matthew and Mark and David and Bathsheba and James and John and all the saints of old and we'll eat with all the martyrs who gave their last breath for Jesus.

We'll eat with Jim Elliott and we'll eat with Zachariah who was slain at the altar and we'll eat with Thomas Cramner and Nicholas Ridley who bloody Mary burned to death and everyone will be there in their new resurrection bodies.

And then when every person, every one of God's elect from every nation and every tribe, children from Africa, old men from China, brothers and sisters from New Zealand will be all there.

Men and women, boys and girls from every island, from every shore, from every language and every people will be there with us. People that we have prayed for over the years but we've never seen, we love them but we've never seen them, will be there.

[15:08] Saints from Neuchatel and Payurn will be there and Grenoble and Carlos Paz, we'll see them. We love them, we have fellowship with them now through prayer but then we will be with them and we will celebrate that day.

So when all of God's saints are there, from all time, from every place, then we will really finally see how great Jesus Christ's victory was on the cross.

And together we will all rejoice in him. When we look around and we see all these people, all these saints, then we will see how powerful Jesus Christ's sacrifice was, how great his love was.

And we'll say he paid the debt for all these people. It will be amazing. The cross will really blow our minds for the first time when we are there with all of those people.

So we eat tonight and we enjoy tonight but we look forward to a better day. we look forward to this supper's fulfillment that Jesus talks about.

[16:22] Well, why will this supper be better? Well, we'll celebrate it with all of God's people and we will celebrate it without sin. We will celebrate it without sin.

Our minds will be free from sin finally. Even now that we are born again and we have a new nature within us.

Our minds are polluted with sin. And as we begin to sit down and think about what Jesus did for us tonight, there is going to be something happening. Sin is going to come in and try to pull our thoughts away from Jesus Christ.

And we will think about anything and everything except for what Jesus did for us. So now, we can't meditate, meditate. We can't think like we want because Jesus is being constantly pulled from our minds by sin.

And every time we think, we can start to understand the thought is so fleeting. We wander off. Well, why is that?

[17:31] It's because of indwelling sin. Indwelling sin is going to make this night a struggle because indwelling sin is constantly warring against the spirit.

The spirit points us to Jesus and his death tonight and sin says no. Don't look at that. Look at something else. Think about something else. So we can never think about Jesus like we want.

We can never think about his death like we want. Our minds on that day though will be free from sin and we will be able to stare and we will be able to wonder at Jesus Christ and sin won't be there.

There will be no wrong thoughts. There will be no wandering away. There will be no confusion.

There will be no chains on our minds and we will finally be able to rejoice like we want to.

Our hearts, our emotions will be freed from sinning. There will be no sin in our desires. When we think what we think, will have its proper effect on us.

[18:40] Do you experience this brothers and sisters? The Bible tells us something remarkable. We read in John and John the Baptist says, behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

And we read that and we just pass over it and it's mundane to us. Our hearts aren't stirred up. Our desires aren't stirred up. Instead of a blazing fire, we have nothing but embers. Because sin ruins our desires.

But when the kingdom of God comes, when this supper is fulfilled, then our desires and our heart will be what they should be. There will be a forest fire within us.

And we will burn with joy and we will burn with delight and we will be a consuming fire of love. And all the coldness will be gone. And there will be nothing there except what should be there now, which is love.

[19:44] And we will see Christ who was crucified. And we will finally glory in that like we've always wanted to. We'll finally be able to give Jesus the treasure of our heart without any sin mixed in.

We'll be able to love him and praise him like he deserves. Tonight, we're going to do our best. And we, I trust, will show him that we love him.

And we will praise him. But there will be sin mixed in. But on that day, there will be no sin. And that day will be better. And that's what this meal is pointing to.

That's what Jesus is saying. There's coming a fulfillment of this. And it will be better. Sin will be destroyed. Well, why will the fulfillment be better?

Third, and best, third and best, Christ will be with us bodily, physically. Christ will be with us bodily.

[20:53] Remember, Jesus, in the passage that we read, Jesus was very eager to eat the Lord's Supper with his disciples. Why? Because he wasn't going to eat it with them anymore. It wasn't going to happen ever again.

And as it turned out, it happened exactly like he said. In a few hours, he was arrested, and the next day, he was crucified, and he was buried.

And on the third day, God raised him from the dead. And he was around for 40 days after his resurrection, but there was never a Passover.

There was never another Lord's Supper. And then after 40 days, he went to heaven. And that is where he is now. He separated from us.

We are here, and he is there. We believe in him, but we believe in what we have never seen. And though we have not seen him, we love him.

[22:00] And even though we do not see him now, we believe in him and are filled with inexpressible and glorious joy. Faith allows us to feed on Jesus Christ tonight.

And that's what this Lord's Supper does. It feeds our faith. We do this in remembrance of him. It helps us to remember him. It puts him before our eyes and before our faith.

And it says with visible words, this is what the Lord did for you. His body was broken for you. His blood was shed for you. And it reminds us of what Jesus Christ suffered.

His body and his soul were torn. The nails pierced his hands and his feet and the spear went through his side.

But the deepest stroke was the stroke that justice gave. And the father offered his soul up as a guilt offering for our sin.

[23:00] And sins were covered that night, that day. Sins were covered at the cost of our Savior's life. And so this meal feeds our faith.

As we feed on Jesus Christ, we are strengthened. It reminds us again of all the things that we so easily forget. And it presents Christ to our faith and it says this, the Savior, he was broken for you. His blood was shed for you. And so we say with Paul, our Passover lamb was slain. And it's under his blood that I hide. On the first Passover, all the Israelites were huddled in their house.

And there was blood over that house. They hid under the blood of the lamb. And we trust in that blood. We hide under the blood of the lamb.

We trust our souls to that sacrifice. And we say our works are nothing. What we can do is nothing. Our goodness is nothing.

[24:12] It's Jesus Christ and him crucified is our only hope. And it's in this meal that we see Christ by faith. But it points to a time when we will no longer see him by faith, but face to face.

Face to face. Faith is good. Faith is much better than having no faith. But right now, even in this meal, we see through a glass darkly.

It's only fleeting glimpses of Jesus Christ that we see. It's like trying to look through a steamed up window to the outside world. You can see trees and you can see houses, but they're just smudges. That's what faith is like. But there we will see him face to face. We will behold his radiance. We will see his glory.

The sun will shine and we will enjoy it. And we will see it with unveiled faces. And so now I see in part, but then I will see fully. Now I know in part, but then I will be fully known, or I will fully know, as even I am fully known.

[25:26] Then, we won't look at bread and juice. We will actually look on his scarred body. And those glorious scars will be ours to see and to wonder and amazement forever and ever.

Now we see by faith. But he will be there for us to see with our own eyes. And so now we sit down with him spiritually. He is here spiritually with us.

He is present with us by his spirit. But there we will sit down with him physically in our bodies. And he will be there in his physical body. That's not to demean his spiritual presence with us at all, but we are more than spirits.

We are body spirit creatures. And he is a body spirit being too. He is more than a spirit. We are more than spirits.

And so on that day, everything will be fulfilled. This meal will be fulfilled when we see our Savior face to face. So now we are apart from him. We are apart from him, but this meal reminds us of him and it points us to the day when we will be with him.

[26:45] We are apart from him now, but someday we will enjoy him forever. So now we are engaged. We are engaged, but we are going to be married.

Engagement is good. Marriage is better. And we are looking at the brochures tonight. And the brochures are good, but being there in heaven with him and walking those streets with him will be better.

And it will happen when the kingdom of God comes. When the kingdom comes, the marriage will begin, and we will be with him, and all of our sadness will be gone.

All of our sin will be gone. All of God's people will be with us, and he will be with us, and we will never leave his side. So this meal points to that glorious day, that wonderful meal.

So as you partake of this meal, remember, remember what Christ did for you. Remember the great cost. Remember what it cost him to purchase you.

[27:53] Remember the pain. Remember the darkness that he went through, and see how much he loves you. What a love. What a cost. But even as you remember that, look ahead to the wonderful day when you will eat this meal again, without sin, with all of your loved ones, and with Jesus Christ, when we see him face to face.

That is what we are going to. And this meal encourages us to remember that.