

Study Guide: The Night of the Last Supper

Pre-Reading: Matthew 26:17–30; Mark 14:12–26; Luke 22:7–38; John 13:1–30

Opening Questions:

1. What does it mean to be served by someone you call “Lord”?
2. How do ordinary rituals (like a meal) become sacred when redefined by Christ?
3. Why do you think Jesus chose this moment, this night, to reveal the meaning of His death?

Key Themes to Explore:

- **Servant Kingship:** The basin and towel as emblems of divine humility.
- **Passover Fulfilled:** The old story of deliverance transfigured into the new covenant.
- **Communion and Betrayal:** Grace extended even to the one who would betray Him.
- **Love’s Command:** The new mandate: *“Love one another as I have loved you.”*

Textual Analysis:

The Last Supper fuses the ancient and the new: Israel’s memory of deliverance joined to Christ’s coming sacrifice. The foot washing and the reinterpreted meal unveil a kingdom built not on domination but on self-giving love.

How does this night reveal that redemption is not a doctrine alone but a Person kneeling in service?

Discussion Questions:

1. Why does Jesus begin the evening by washing the disciples’ feet instead of teaching?
2. What is the theological meaning behind the broken bread and poured wine?
3. How does Judas’ departure into darkness intensify the contrast between love and rejection?

4. In what sense does the “new commandment” summarize the entire gospel?
5. How does the narrator's drowsiness and assumption that 'tomorrow would make sense of tonight' reflect our own tendency to miss urgent spiritual moments?

Contemporary Applications:

- How can the church recover the posture of Christlike service without losing reverence?
- In what ways do believers today “wash one another’s feet”?
- How might we carry the meaning of this meal into our daily relationships and work?
- When has God disrupted your comfortable religious routines to reveal something deeper?

Personal Reflection:

- What part of the story stirs you most: the basin, the bread, the cup, the commandment, or something else?
- When have you struggled to let Jesus serve you instead of trying to serve Him?
- What does love “as I have loved you” look like in your context right now?
- What 'nagging feelings' in your spiritual life might you be dismissing as 'too much wine, too many strange words'?

Group Activity:

Reenact the structure of the Passover meal as described in the Gospels: reclined seating, cups, unleavened bread, readings from the Hallel (Psalms 113–118).

Afterward, discuss how Jesus’ words, “*This is My body... This is My blood,*” transform the story from remembrance to participation.