



The Last Supper

15th Confirmation Class Lesson

Supplies Needed: Notebooks; Handout; 1 glass/cup per student; 1 chocolate chip cookie and enough milk for each student (be aware of allergies and buy accordingly)

Opening Activity – Blame game

- We're all going to stand in a circle
- The leader (that's me) starts by pointing at someone. [point at someone]
- The leader keeps pointing at that someone while that someone now points at someone else.
- That someone else now points to someone else (who isn't yet pointing), until everyone is pointing at someone else (last person can point at whomever, preferably the leader).
- Now, the person you are pointing at is your idol.
- Stop pointing at your idol and instead, just *stare* at your idol
- Everyone is to hold perfectly still
- If your idol moves, then you are to do exactly what he/she just did.
- If they talk, or make a sound, or blink, or flinch or sway, then you do exactly what they did.
- You MAY NOT move unless your idol moves and then you are only doing EXACTLY what your idol is doing.
- **Note:** If your class is filled with typical teenagers, the circle will be a raucous circus within 30 seconds. If, however, they are somehow low energy or tired that day, you might have to make a few movements (and hope the person staring at you copies them) to get a ripple effect going.

DO Opening Activity for a few minutes

--if the movement gets out of hand, feel free to restart the activity

--depending on time and if the class CANNOT hold still, make one person the "buck stops here" person, who does NOT copy the movements of his/her idol.

ASK

- We were supposed to hold still, but what happened?
- So who started moving first? Whose fault was it that we moved? (let them blame each other for a few moments)
- How much does it really matter who started it, once it got started?
- It sure is easy to blame each other, isn't it?
- Why is it easier, do you think, to blame one another instead of taking responsibility for our own actions? (it is easier if others have to change, instead of having to do the hard work of change ourselves)
- In part of the story today, we'll see how the disciples start doing the same thing to each other.

OPENING PRAYER

CHALLENGE OF THE WEEK REVIEW

We were to think about and list the things about Jesus/God that worry you or concern you or make you uncomfortable. So what are your worries/concerns about God? What about God makes you uncomfortable?

REVIEW

- Concepts we've talked about recently in class:
 - Christ means "anointed." To be anointed is a way the Israelites signified someone being made ready to be king (sort of like how the British "knight" folks with the sword being tapped on each shoulder). Being anointed though was a symbol that came from oiling sheep's ears so that ticks couldn't climb in and kill them by eating their brains.
 - We talked about forgiveness in the story of the woman who anointed Jesus' feet with ointment because she was so thankful. Forgiveness works in tandem with repentance, and when we ask for and receive it, it frees us from the feelings of guilt and shame that come from living separate from God.
 - We talked about the parable of the Sower and how, if we thought of the Word of God like a seed and thought of ourselves as soil, then we'd want to be aware of how to prepare our soil to receive the seed.
 - In our last class, we talked about how following Jesus offers many gifts to us, things that we would want in ourselves and for others. But that also following Jesus is disruptive (the story we looked at was "Palm Sunday" – Jesus entering the city, crying for it and then cleaning out the Temple). That disruptive quality of following Jesus can be unexpected and scary. Which leads us to our Challenge of the Week review.

TELL

- During these next number of weeks, we are paying attention to the last week of Jesus' ministry. It started with what we now call "Palm Sunday." Today, we're going to talk about the Last Supper.

READ Luke 22 (from The Message)

1 The Feast of Unleavened Bread, also called Passover, drew near. 2 The high priests and religion scholars were looking for a way to do away with Jesus but, fearful of the people, they were also looking for a way to cover their tracks. 3 That's when Satan entered Judas, the one called Iscariot. He was one of the Twelve. 4 Leaving the others, Judas conferred with the high priests and the Temple guards about how he might betray Jesus to them. 5 They couldn't believe their good luck and agreed to pay him well. 6 He gave them his word and started looking for a way to betray Jesus, but out of sight of the crowd. 7 The Day of Unleavened Bread came, the day the Passover lamb was butchered.

14 When it was time, Jesus sat down, all the apostles with him, 15 and said, "You've no idea how much I have looked forward to eating this Passover meal with you before I enter my time of suffering. 16 It's the last one I'll eat until we all eat it together in the kingdom of God."

17 Taking the cup, he blessed it, then said, "Take this and pass it among you. 18 As for me, I'll not drink wine again until the kingdom of God arrives." 19 Taking bread, he blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, given for you. Eat it in my memory."

20 He did the same with the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant written in my blood, blood poured out for you.

21 "Do you realize that the hand of the one who is betraying me is at this moment on this table?
22 It's true that the Son of Man is going down a path already marked out - no surprises there. But for the one who turns him in, the one who turns traitor to the Son of Man, this is doomsday for him."

23 They immediately became suspicious of each other and began quizzing one another, wondering who might be about to do this. 24 Within minutes they were bickering over who of them would end up the greatest.

25 But Jesus intervened: "Kings like to throw their weight around and people in authority like to give themselves fancy titles. 26 It's not going to be that way with you. Let the senior among you become like the junior; let the leader act the part of the servant

31 "Simon, stay on your toes. Satan has tried his best to separate all of you from me, like chaff from wheat. 32 Simon, I've prayed for you in particular that you not give in or give out. When you have come through the time of testing, turn to your companions and give them a fresh start." 33 Peter said, "Master, I'm ready for anything with you. I'd go to jail for you. I'd die for you!" 34 Jesus said, "I'm sorry to have to tell you this, Peter, but before the rooster crows you will have three times denied that you know me."

ASK/TELL about the Scripture story

- In verse one, what are the Israelites celebrating? (Passover)
- In verse three, it says Satan "enters" Judas.
 - Do you remember what the word "Satan" mean? (adversary)
 - Do you remember what word is interchangeable with Satan? (Devil)
 - Which means? (divider)
 - And what does the voice of the devil/temptation do? (makes the choice to NOT live God's way seem attractive)
- With that in mind, how do you interpret the line "Satan entered Judas?" (Judas somehow became convinced that God's Way/Jesus' way wasn't right/wasn't working)
- What things do you think might have divided Judas' mind? (might have been upset about the cleansing of the Temple; might have been upset that Jesus wasn't planning to use all the momentum he had at the moment to throw Rome out of Jerusalem; might have been thinking that getting the Pharisees to be on their side would be better than having them as enemies; its hard to say...).
- In verse 14, who does Jesus sit down with? (all the disciples – which includes Judas)
- And what does Jesus say? (I've been looking forward to this)
- Jesus says it's his last meal AND in verse 21 we see that he knows someone in that room is going to betray him. So, what do you make of him looking *forward* to that meal? Do you think he's lying? What's he looking forward to?
- Are you surprised that Jesus doesn't try to stop Judas?
- Why do you think Jesus doesn't try to stop him? (because following Jesus is a choice – you can't force choices; because Judas' betrayal or not probably won't change the outcome – the Pharisees are still going to be against Jesus, no matter what)
- How do the disciples respond in verse 23 to this announcement of betrayal? (they accuse one another and then start talking about who is the greatest of them – somewhat similar to our opening activity, yes?)

- In verse 31 – What does Jesus tell Peter/Simon that Satan will try to do? (separate/divide)
- Do you think that is the same thing as what's happening with Judas?
 - If yes, then why do you think Judas gets such a bad rap and Peter does not? (because Peter repents and receives forgiveness and moves on, Judas, knowing he made a mistake, does not seek forgiveness and kills himself)
- In verse 20, Jesus tells his disciples to think of the bread as his body and the wine as his blood. Does this gross you out at all?
- In the middle, there's the Last Supper, but it's book-ended with betrayal (Peter's and Judas'). All in all, it's a pretty stressful dinner, don't you think?

ASK/TELL about Passover

- Do you remember the reason for the meal? (It's the Passover meal).
- Do you remember what the Passover was? (When the Israelites were being freed from Egypt, the last plague was God's angel of death killed the first born of everyone's house. However, the angel "passed over" the houses where lamb's blood had been put on the doorposts of the houses – which is what the Israelites had done, so their children were spared. This last plague finally caused Pharaoh to let the Israelites leave Egypt).
- **So when Jesus says at the Passover meal, "This is my body and blood," he's linking himself to the lamb of the Passover meal. He's saying that his body and blood will symbolize a new way in which we are "set free" from the things that enslave us.**
- Did you notice in verse 19 what Jesus does? He does the same thing as he does in the feeding of the thousands. He takes the bread, blesses it, breaks it and then gives it. Let's keep that in mind as we...

SNACK

TELL

- The Last Supper is one of two sacraments of the UCC.
- We call it Communion.
- The actual word, "communion" means "a feeling of emotional & spiritual closeness."
- An ironic choice of words, don't you think, after having just studied that the first communion actually consisted of betrayal, blame, and boasting?
- It is no coincidence that Jesus chose bread and wine, the two most common items that Israelites would have at every meal.
- By choosing common meal items, Jesus is telling his disciples to remember him often, not just on "special" occasions.
- As a congregation, we participate in communion on the first Sunday of every month in the Sunday morning worship
- Those are the "special" occasions upon which we have communion as a congregation.
- But every time we sit down to eat, that is communion too, whether we are aware of it or not.
- Our awareness is what makes something common into something holy (like with Moses, where the burning bush created awareness for Moses that the ground he was on was holy).
- When we invite God into a meal time, then God can help us create that feeling of emotional & spiritual closeness with those around us.

Last Supper

- So, we're going to participate in our own Last Supper.
- We're not going to do it the way we necessarily do it on Sunday morning, but there will be some similarities.
- We'll be looking at and acting out the four elements of the Lord's Supper: Take, bless, break, give.

- So, the first thing we do is receive what has been offered to us.

In this case, it's food (in the form of chocolate chip cookies).

So take your share.

- The second thing we do is bless what has been offered to us.

A common Jewish blessing, one similar to what people in Jesus' day would have said, goes like this:

Blessed are you, LORD our God, King of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.

We can say something like, "Thank you, God, for this life and food you give to us."

So let us say that now.

- The third thing we do is break what has been given to us:

In other words, we prepare our food and eat it (but not all of it).

Let's do that now.

- The fourth thing we do is share.

We've received what's been given, we've blessed it, we've prepared it to be eaten and maybe have eaten some of it, but now as a way to remind ourselves that just like God has shared this food with us, so then should we share with those around us.

So we offer what we have been given. And drink our milk to go with our cookies.

- When we receive what our neighbor is offering us, then that in effect starts the cycle of take, bless, break, give all over again.
- If we did this with all that we have, I think that would create a very strong sense of communion among us.

CHALLENGE OF THE WEEK

Jesus while in the midst of unfaithful and arguing disciples is thankful to have a meal with them. To be able to give thanks in such circumstances ((or "in all circumstances" as the apostle Paul puts it) takes practice. One way to practice is to review then give thanks after the fact. At the end of two different days this week, write down what you received during the day (good and bad) and give thanks to God for the ways you understand God was with you during those times.

CLOSING PRAYER – ask for prayer requests and give time during prayer for students to pray.