

“[RE]FRAME - Preparing for the New”

Scripture: Mark 14:12-26

Graphics: frames, pictures, bread and cup

Big Truth: The story of Jesus’ final week on Earth has multiple levels of understanding and meaning. What the events and actions seem to be on the surface are not always what they appear. In our walk with Jesus in the church, it’s easy to lose sight of the bigger picture while reading or hearing about the events of Jesus’ life. This series will help us see the bigger picture through the scenes that lead to the cross and empty tomb on Easter.

Focus phrase: Jesus sits at your table to invite you to His table.

1. Introduction

- A. Thanks, again, for joining us today for this online version of worship. Let’s get into God’s word this morning to continue this series we’ve called ReFrame.
- B. We’ve been walking with Jesus as He takes one-day-at-a-time in the last week of His life. A week that lead to the cross and the empty tomb of Easter.
- C. So far, we’ve REFRAMED Jesus’ entry in Jerusalem, his overturning the tables in the Temple, the conflict he was experiencing, and his time of anointing by Mary as He prepared the world for the NEW day that’s coming... a day when COVID-19 will be defeated and every other disease and struggle.
- D. But we’re not there yet...and sometimes it’s helpful just to take one-day-at-a-time. I’ve noticed that over the last week or so, it seems like taking one-day-at-a-time is all we can do. One of my friends on FB said that the new definition of future planning is anything that will occur in the next 7 days.
- E. Like you, I’ve been home more than usual this week. I’ve noticed things that I’d forgotten about, or that I usually walk by without noticing. Maybe a project that’s been sitting idle for a while, a bag of sports equipment that’s unused right now, or even something that needs cleaning, sorting, or tossing.
- F. ONE of the things that Stacy and I have done more intentionally this past week - as I’m sure you have - is eat together. We’ve done more meal **planning**, since we can’t just run to the store without feeling like we’re heading into an uncontrolled germ fest. So, we’ve spent more time **preparing** those meals together. And, because we have more time, we’ve spent more time **eating** those meals without having to run to a game or meeting or rehearsal.
- G. Something as simple as planning, preparing, and eating a meal has become an opportunity for profound meaning and gratitude in our lives.
- H. Think back to the meals you’ve had this week. Think about what those meals have meant to you. It’s different, isn’t it, knowing that we can’t easily go out to eat...we have limits on what we can or can’t buy...we have more time to eat those meals?

- I. What was, in some ways, a simple meal that we've rushed through as a means of nourishment, has become something for which we turn to God in thanks for the simple provision of a meal.
- J. In our scripture today, Jesus **planned for, prepared, and ate a meal** with His disciples. That meal - called the Passover - was a meal that the disciples and Jesus had eaten many times. Yet, the meal they prepared to eat with Jesus during the last week of his life was **different**...the disciples didn't know it, but it would be the LAST one...the Last Supper.
- K. Jesus REFRAMED a simple meal and pointed to an incredible truth, not only for the disciples, but also for US. That truth is that **Jesus wants to come sit at our tables, in our homes, to eat with us**. As He sits down with us, Jesus invites us to offer every aspect of our lives - however simple or complicated - to Him...to use for His purposes...and to bring Him glory today, especially right now in the midst of this unsettling time.
- L. Let's see how the planning, preparation, and eating happened that day in the first century, as we ask ourselves, "What kind of meal is this?" - which is the title of our message today.
- M. Let's pray...and then open our bibles... PRAY!
- N. Grab your bible and turn with me to Mark chapter 14, starting in verse 12, which is where we left off last week.

2. Scripture

A. READ verses 14:12-16

- i. In this first section, Jesus PLANNED FOR and had the disciples PREPARE the Passover meal.
- ii. Jesus had this all figured out ahead of time, it seems. The disciples just had to be faithful to listen to Jesus' instructions. He told them to "...go into the city and find a man carrying a jar of water, and he will lead you to the place where I want you to prepare the meal."
- iii. When the disciples got to the city, they found everything just as Jesus had said. No surprise since Jesus did the same thing in Mark 11 when he sent them into the city to get the colt on which he rode in Jerusalem.
- iv. So, they found the room, and they prepared the meal. Then, they went out to find Jesus and invite Him to the table they had set.
- v. At that point, the disciples were just proud of themselves for doing what Jesus asked...hearing the **plan** and **preparing** the table for Jesus.
- vi. Let's turn to verse 17...

B. READ verses 14:17-26

- i. And just like that, this simple meal that they had so skillfully and lovingly set for Jesus and them, turned into a confusing, painful event.
- ii. At the beginning of the meal with Jesus, they were thinking that everything was just like it had always been...that they were celebrating the Passover meal. If you remember, the Passover was told about in the OT book of Exodus when the Jewish people were slaves in Egypt thousands of years ago. God was going to punish Pharaoh for not setting God's people free. Every Jewish household that put the blood of a lamb on the doorposts would be spared. God 'passed over' the houses of those Israelites.
- iii. The disciples' Passover meal with Jesus that evening was a celebration of God's deliverance and mercy and grace and love on them, as His people.
- iv. But then Jesus started to talk about betrayal by one of his own...he said something about a body as he broke the bread...and he took the cup that they would drink from and said it was his blood.
- v. This simple meal...was now, well, not so simple.
- vi. At first glance, it appears that Jesus used that moment to tell them that about betrayal...and that this meal was their last one together.
- vii. But Jesus was doing more than that. Jesus was **reframing** that simple meal, putting that picture into a different frame, to give the disciples a new understanding of what life would be like now that they'd been invited to that table...on that night...with Him...one last time.
- viii. Jesus' was about to hand over his earthly life to those who were seeking to destroy Him. His broken body, represented by the broken bread. His spilled blood, represented by the red wine in the cup that they shared.
- ix. See, this wasn't JUST a Passover meal. In Jesus' new frame, it was an **invitation** for the disciples to take the next steps with Jesus...for them to understand that His death would have eternal significance for the world.
- x. Because this was the Passover meal, HIS broken body would be the broken body of the lamb - killed to provide the blood that went on the doorposts of the homes of the Israelite slaves in Egypt...and God spared them.
- xi. Because this was the Passover meal, the promise that God gave to the Israelite slaves in Egypt to deliver them out of bondage, was now the blood that would deliver the disciples from their bondage to sin and death.
- xii. Jesus reframed this simple meal into God's plan for them...for you and me.
- xiii. And He did all that while he was sitting around a simple table with those He loved. He invited them to believe it and live into it.

3. Application

- A. We can all use some Good News today, amidst the crazy barrage of news and the social media blackhole.
- B. Today, in worship, we were supposed to be together to celebrate communion. During communion, we remember Jesus' sacrifice together, we invite the presence of Jesus, and we join together in eating bread and drinking juice.
- C. Maybe my mention of communion and this scripture have increased your desire to only celebrate communion, but to simply be together. And because we can't do that right now, that makes us want that even more!
- D. And, instead of being here, you find yourself right now in your own home...or at least in a familiar place other than the church building.
- E. The question we're asking is not, "When can I take communion?" or even "Why can't we take communion together right now?"
- F. The question we're asking is "What Kind of Meal is This?" Because when we REFRAME this, the meaning of the meal gives us hope in our time away from each other.
- G. The simple answer is that communion is a meal with Jesus. Just like it was when the disciples sat around that table with Him. It really doesn't have to be any more complicated than that. Sure, when we celebrate Holy Communion in the sanctuary together, there are special things we say and do that help us remember, and invite, and give thanks all together. When we are together, the very real presence of Jesus comes as a gift to the gathered community.
- H. But Jesus isn't contained to the sanctuary at church...and communion isn't the only meal we get to eat.
- I. So what would it look like if for every meal we eat in our homes, especially during this incredible time of separation, we view it as an opportunity to invite Jesus to sit with us, remember Jesus' sacrifice, give thanks to and for Jesus?
- J. When we feel isolated, lonely, or separated, setting a place for Jesus at the table may be the one thing that gives us the peace we've been seeking during this crisis.
- K. Look, Jesus has the PLAN figured out - his life is an example for us...his death is our source of forgiveness...and his resurrection is our promise of everlasting life, no matter what happens today or tomorrow.
- L. Your job is to PREPARE the table and invite Jesus into your home today. If you have your family with you, then invite them to prepare the table every day with you for Jesus to come. If you're by yourself right now, then who better to invite to your table than Jesus.
- M. No matter what your circumstance right now, Jesus will come and eat with you if you invite Him. And as he does, he will invite YOU, your family, and those

who are eating with him at THEIR tables in THIER houses, to use the simple every day things of life, like eating and drinking, to create a space for Him.

- N. If we've learned anything during this global pandemic, it's that we need more space for the eternally important things...and less space given to the things that don't seem to matter quite as much.
- O. How can God use your new normal in these odd times to help you see your home and everyday life as the places that Jesus wants to meet you today? How can you REFRAAME your table to include Jesus...to bring hope...and move you to action because of His sacrifice and love for you?
- P. See, because Jesus doesn't just want to eat with you...Jesus wants to also use your table as a missional launchpad to love God and love others.

4. Conclusion

- A. Take a look around you right now. Take a look at the familiar furniture, the people, the room. We've gotten really used to our rooms and furniture and families this week.
- B. Now, picture Jesus sitting at your table...sitting next to you on the couch. (Maybe he's wearing his pajamas, too!)
- C. After worship, when you eat, prayerfully invite Jesus to be at your table.
- D. He wants to be the constant presence in our every day lives. He will be the One that never leaves us or forsakes us. He will be the One who comforts us in the hard times and gives us a vision of the hopeful future.
- E. If you don't yet know Jesus as your Savior, take time today to simply invite Him into your life...to come be at your table...to forgive you and love you.
- F. Then, every meal can be a thanksgiving...a communion...and meal with Jesus.
- G. I can't WAIT until we can all be back together again...especially to celebrate communion.
- H. Until then, let's invite Jesus to be present at each of our tables. Pray for each other. Keep reaching out to each other and asking how we're doing.
- I. This week, ask yourself and others where Jesus showed up in the middle of the mess. Give thanks and praise for His abiding presence right there in your home...at your table...and in your heart.
- J. Let's Pray...