

**A New Covenant
Mark 14:22-26**

As we return to Mark to continue where we have left off, I'm not sure where you're at with your favorite genre of book you like to read or movies that you enjoy watching or shows, how you enjoy being entertained and what fashion that is. But one that is always attractive and entertaining to me is the whole genre of mystery. The whole genre of mystery and the mystery thriller is so fascinating and satisfying at the same time. To be on edge, to have some facts, to have some information and to see it all surrounding and trying to make connections, but to still be missing just the right piece, the right puzzle piece, the right data, the right event, or understanding that then just makes it all come together, and then you understand the story. You understand the plot. You understand why people did what they did and said what they did, and it all just comes together in this kind of brilliant fashion, if it's done well of course. I've been let down before. But done well, that is the art of mystery, how this all can just be tense and left on edge until you see that missing puzzle piece come in, and it all kind of shines bright and makes sense.

We really have that happening this morning for the disciples. For the disciples, this is an "aha" moment for them. This is a massive moment in terms of what they've experienced thus far with Jesus. And to give you what I'm talking about up front as far as the puzzle pieces and the data that they do have, that then also still has gaps in it, still has parts of it that they need to piece together. They would love to see it all come together. It all really comes back to the very beginning of Mark's gospel. In chapter 1 you'll remember, Mark gets right into Jesus doing His ministry and as Jesus does His ministry, He heads right up to Galilee, and He starts preaching, and in the content of that preaching we realize what He's saying; "...the kingdom of God is at hand; and you must repent and believe..." ... "...the kingdom of God..." is near. "...the kingdom of God is at hand..." Jesus wasn't the only one that was preaching this. John the Baptist who came before Christ was saying the same things. And then later on in Mark's gospel, we even saw Jesus delegate some of this preaching to His disciples. He gathers them to Himself, and He says I'm going to give you power. I'm going to give you ability. Go. Go, and teach, and what are they to proclaim? "...the kingdom of God is at hand..." Now, for those receiving this message, for the Jewish people there that are hearing John the Baptist, hearing Jesus, and then

hearing the disciples talk about "...the kingdom of God..." being near, this is wonderful. This is a joyous message. This is a wonderful thing to hear, to have gracing your ears, that God's rule and reign is going to come down through His Messiah in Jerusalem over the nation of Israel and over the entire earth. Justice will then be present. Righteousness will abound. There will be peace. All these things they expected when they heard of "...the kingdom of God..." was upon them, and as they knew it from the Old testament, a wonderful message, a wonderful truth that they no doubt embraced as Jesus was saying it, and they were told to preach it to others.

But then Mark introduced us to this other set of information, this other data that floods the scene starting in Mark 8, and that is Jesus turning to His disciples and saying I must die. I must be arrested. I must be persecuted. I must be put on trial. I must go to My death. I must die. And of course at that moment, the disciples are thinking, how does this fit? How does this actually work together? You just told us about this kingdom coming that we've been excited, waiting for, and yet You must die? This does not compute. This does not work together. And Jesus says it again, and He says it again, and He keeps predicting that He must go to the cross. He does it even more than three times. And as we come to where we are this morning, He yet again predicts and prophesies that He must die. Yet, what we have is an "aha" moment because He brings it all together. Why it is that He must die and how it is that the kingdom of God can and will move forward. That's what we find in our text this morning. So, let's jump right back into the Passover meal. Let's jump right back into The Last Supper, and let's see this "aha" moment for the disciples and whether or not they really grasped it and understood it at this moment. The probability is low. They were slow to learn, like we would've been as well, but nonetheless the content is here as Mark records it for us.

Let's look at Mark 14:22-26; "And as they were eating, he took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to them, and said, 'Take; this is my body.' And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. And he said to them, 'This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly, I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.' And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives." This is where we pick up - where we left off in this Passover meal, the whole reason why Jesus and the disciples along with

several thousands of other Jewish people had made their way from all over Israel, specifically in Galilee, on down to Judea, to Jerusalem, to the temple for Passover - for Passover - for this meal, really, for this meal; for they would remember what God had done - what God did back in the book of Exodus when He took this people, the people of Israel that were in bondage and in slavery to the Egyptians and brought them out in dramatic and wonderful fashion. This amazing event that's recorded in the Old Testament was supposed to be remembered through this, this Passover meal. That is what is taking place, this wonderful, you could say the most important, meal of the year. For any Jewish person at this time, the most significant meal that they could have was this meal, the Passover meal. And this is where Jesus chooses to try to connect the dots for them, bring the picture into full view and to give them the idea of what must take place and how it all makes sense.

This is what we have before us, and in doing so in verse 22, as we resume looking at this Last Supper, this Passover meal, we see Jesus looking to His death once again. This is where He speaks of His body in verse 22. His body symbolized - His body symbolized in verse 22. Again, we read, "And as they were eating, he took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to them, and said, 'Take; this is my body...'" Remember, they're eating, and we have said this is the Passover meal. And where we left off when we kind of chopped it off last time, and as we jump in this time, we left off with them being together and eating with one another and Jesus revealing this terrible information that there would be a traitor, that there was already a traitor among them, Judas Iscariot, that would really be accountable and responsible for this heinous act of betraying the Son of Man, Jesus the Messiah. And Jesus makes this known. So, they are still eating this meal, and He had just revealed this information. Probably at this point, Judas Iscariot has been dismissed. If we look at John's account, we recognize how Jesus revealed that it was Judas. In John 13:30, "So, after receiving the morsel of bread [that is Judas], he immediately went out. And it was night." More than likely at this point in Mark's gospel, we now just have Jesus and the eleven, no longer Judas there because he is out to do his terrible act of betraying Jesus.

As far as the Passover meal is concerned, we're not certain exactly what moment this is, at what point. Some commentators want to speculate and guess at what point of the meal this is, what cup they had just been drinking

or what food they were eating. We just don't know. We just don't have the information. So, that is not necessarily pertinent and important for us, but the meal is still taking place. This most significant meal of the year. The Passover meal when Jesus speaks up; "And as they were eating, he took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to them..." Alright. This is Jesus really departing from... this wasn't the expected norm of a Passover meal. This wasn't commanded for them in the book of Exodus. This wasn't in Deuteronomy. For them to have a moment where someone breaks and blesses bread and passes it out, this is a departure. This is Jesus seizing the moment, seizing their attention by what He says and what He does. This wasn't the leaven bread that they were used to. This was Passover which kicked off the whole week of Unleavened Bread as you recall. And why was that? Because Deuteronomy tell us. They had to have this flat bread, this bread that didn't have leaven or yeast in it, this bread that you can make very quickly, that was kind of like a cracker they called matzah.

This is why in Deuteronomy 16:3-4, "You shall eat no leavened bread with it [that's with the Passover meal]. Seven days you shall eat it with unleavened bread, the bread of affliction—for you came out of the land of Egypt in haste—that all the days of your life you may remember the day when you came out of the land of Egypt. No leaven shall be seen with you in all your territory for seven days..." This was what was expected of them as they recalled how quickly it was that God brought them out of Egypt. It was the moment where they had the nightfall. They had the necessity laid upon them to slaughter their animal and put the blood on the doorpost as you recall from last time. And this was their command so that their first born would not be killed or destroyed as the destroyer the, really God Himself, going through and taking the lives of the first born of every household in the land of Egypt. This was a terrible and tumultuous and sorrowful scene that then led to the Egyptians kicking out the Israelites saying leave now. So, this quick version of bread, this matzah, this unleavened bread, reminds them of how they had to hastily leave as God removed them and brought them out to worship Him.

Jesus blesses this bread. As they would recall and look back to the deliverance they had from Egypt, they wouldn't recognize the deliverance He's about to proclaim to them. He blesses this bread; this doesn't mean that He kind of does some spell upon it or causes it to be extra healthy or something of that nature. This isn't Him giving some special ingredients in this bread. This is simply Him thanking God for the bread as He would

thank Him for the cup as well at the meal. He breaks the bread which was also not anything symbolic or particular. It's just a simple way of passing it out. He takes the bread, breaks it into pieces, passes it out to the eleven that are there. Some people want to try and read more into this. They want to say the breaking of the bread is like Jesus when He died and was broken and went to the cross, but the reality is actually none of Jesus' bones were broken; that was, like, to fulfill prophecy. So, you can't overdo things and start to read into this Passover meal and everything that's going on and saying this is symbolic for this, and this must relate to this. It's just not stated in Scripture, but what is stated, Jesus' words. He passes out this bread and says, "Take; this is my body." ... "...this is my body."

Jesus is creating this unique and special moment at this meal. He's departing from the norm of what they would do at a Passover meal, and He's getting everyone's attention and then says something massive; "...this is my body." He's utilizing this opportunity to predict yet again that He must die, another opportunity for Him to tell them this is what you can expect; I must die. I must die. We know this even more so from parallel passages. Like in Luke's account, we have these words (Luke 22:15), "And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." Jesus continues to make this known. His body which is for them, offered up for them. This is Him reminding them that He must suffer. But we have to ask this question, in what sense is He talking about this? Really, in what sense did Jesus mean that this bread was Him? In what sense was this bread His body? There's been a good amount of variety over it. You recall this scene as we've read it, and you are now reminded of, well, this is why we do communion. This is why we have that once a month where we have this time of recalling what Jesus really mentions here and what we're even commanded to do in other accounts, to do this, really, in remembrance of Him. And so you go, oh, yeah, communion, I see it. This is why we celebrate this.

However, when you look at how different churches have done this and how they've gone about this, it's quite interesting to see how they view this time of communion. And to make sure we understand correctly what's being done here, for instance, does "...this is my body" intend to communicate that the bread of communion literally becomes the body of Christ as the Roman Catholic church would teach in their doctrine of transubstantiation? Or, perhaps, "...this is my body" means that Jesus' body is supernaturally or

spiritually infused or involved in the eating of the communion bread as other denominations and even such as the Lutherans hold to? Well, we can look at this, and I think if we just let the Scripture speak for itself, we get a pretty good and clear answer that the phrase, "...this is my body," is a phrase intending to identify correspondence or representation, very simple. The communion bread is the symbol to remember Christ's body on behalf of sinners. That's it. Don't go beyond that. We don't need that to. Just think about the disciples; if you were there in this moment, how would you have understood what Jesus was saying? Well, Jesus was right there in front of you, so you probably wouldn't have thought that that bread was His body when you saw His right there. You wouldn't have been thinking that. That wouldn't have been going through your head, and you would've probably been thinking about other statements that Jesus made in His life and ministry, like "I am the door" or "I am the true vine..." Did you get all confused when He said those, too? Is He really a tree of some sort? How does this work?

It's simple; when Jesus wants to speak and deliver messages and truth in metaphorical or nonliteral fashion, everyone knew it. You didn't even have to ask. You wouldn't even have to raise your hand and get clarification. So, too, the disciples would understand. This is very clear that this is just as simple, just as simple, just a representation. That's it. We don't need to think more beyond that. It would be fair to understand the expression, "...this is my body," as this represents Me. Pass this bread; this represents Me and leave it at that. We don't need to try to spiritualize it more or make it more than it really is. So, Jesus doesn't only speak of His body through the symbol of the bread here, but He also goes on to speak of His blood and its significance. The blood signified - the blood signified in verses 23-24. This is where Jesus gets into explaining why. We now have an explanation of why it is that He must die. We've, before this, just had statements of fact that He is going to die. He must die, that this is His mission. This is the way that He will obey His Father. But now there's an explanation. Now there's understanding for why He must go to the cross. Verse 23; "And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. And he said to them, 'This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.'" He took a cup. And some people, once again, want to read into this and say that this must be the third or the fourth cup of the Passover meal, and He utilized one of those and used this time... Well, we don't really get that from Mark. All we have is, "And he took a cup..." alright?

Just a cup there on the table and He used this opportunity. He gave thanks just like He did it with the bread, praising God who has blessed them with every good thing including the food and the drink that they had in front of them and they all drank of it. He passed this around "...and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it."

But notice the explanation that comes in verse 24; and He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many." Therein we have significance. Therein we have explanation where we have not had this before; "This is my blood of the covenant..." In the same way that the bread represents Jesus' body, so now we have the cup representing His blood that would be shed and poured out. Jesus states that His blood was the "...blood of the covenant..." So, we have to just take a second here to recognize what is being said so we get the significance, we understand the explanation here. What is the covenant? What are we talking about? Because we've seen covenants at times in Scripture, and we're actually blessed to have the Old Testament and see how God has interacted with Israel. And through those interactions, there were times when God made covenants with His people. And at a basic sense, a covenant is just the word agreement. You just strike an agreement with someone. It's two parties coming together, stating the terms by which they will have an agreement. Who will do what in exchange for what, and then they shake upon it, or however they want to decide that, that is the agreement. That is the covenant between the two parties. In the Bible, it's a little different. When God is making covenants with people, with His people, it's a little bit more like God telling them the terms and saying this is what we're doing and them saying, okay, right. It's not just negotiation that takes place between God and Israel, God tells Israel this is what's happening. This is what's going to take place. This is what God tells His people. As one commentator states it, "God's covenant with Israel was no voluntary agreement between two equals. It was initiated by Jehovah. He set its terms while Israel voluntarily agreed to obey its stipulations." And that was for their good. It really was.

And so, we dive into the Old Testament a little bit, and we take a look at the different covenants that we can find. You will find some of these, and they often look familiar because they are massive in what God is stating to His people. We're aware of the Noachic Covenant where we have this story that we're so aware of, this worldwide flood that takes place and destroys so much of mankind and animals because of the violence and the sinfulness of

mankind, yet God preserving some, a remnant, to then fill and populate the earth. And what does God promise? As we know, as we state and tell our children, He will not flood the earth again. This is God deciding this. This this isn't Noah looking up and saying God, if you don't mind, it'd be nice to not have to build another ark in the future. Alright? This is God deciding I will not do this again. I have made My covenant with you, and I will give you seasons for harvest as you live on this earth.

If you look at how God started Israel, you look at this man Abraham and how God called this man and this family and decided to bless them, to give them a land, to make them a great name, to make them a blessing to really all the nations of the earth. God decided this with Abraham, and He promised it to him, and He promised it to his sons. He promised it to Isaac. He promised it to Jacob, and He continued to promise it to His people. These were covenants and agreements that God made. Well, one of these was the Mosaic covenant, down there in Exodus, and that was the means by which these blessings would come as God promised blessing to the nation of Israel. How would that come? In what form would that take? It was through them obeying the Law of God as He gave it to Moses. This is what was to take place, and if you were to look back and see how this covenant went down, you're remembering the Ten Commandments and Mt. Sinai and some of these moments here where it was just a smoky scene with earthquake and lightning and thunder. That really frightened the people, and then the Law was delivered to them, and they decided, yes, we will obey this Law. And to signify that, they truly were in agreement and that this was now the covenant. This was the agreement between God and His people moving forward. Moses took blood. He took blood from the animals that they had sacrificed, and he sprinkles it on the people there as they're agreeing to these terms.

It is through and often times in covenants that there is the sacrifice of animals, that there is the shedding of blood that then begins and solidifies this agreement. So, we see these covenants that take place throughout Scripture, and we ask the question, what covenant are we talking about here with Jesus? What covenant are we talking about? He says, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many." Well, we actually have a little help from even parallel passages that tell us it's the new covenant. It's the new covenant, and that word, that phrase, if it doesn't ring a bell to you, trust me, it did for the disciples, and it did for the Jewish people. The new

covenant was just emblazoned on their mind. They knew that phrase. It was their hope. It was their joy. It was their expectation. They were locked into the new covenant. They looked forward to the new covenant. It was the better, hopeful covenant, that they anticipated. So, when Jesus says this, we recognize that He is referring to that new covenant there in Jeremiah 31:31-32. And Jeremiah, being a prophet near the end of the nation of Israel and their time, gives us some of the details of this new covenant. What do we find when we look at what Jeremiah says? He states, “Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord.” In verses 33-34 we go on to read, “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. [And watch this last line] For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

This is massive. This is a massive deal that God is making with His people. This is a wonderful promise that Jeremiah is introducing to these people, these wicked and sinful people, that if they knew anything, they knew that their relationship with God was not what it was supposed to be. It was fractured. It was terrible. They were evil. They were wicked. The priests, the kings, the prophets, they failed at leading the people and giving them the truth so that they could have relationship with God. But what does God promise still? A new covenant where people can know Him and there can be relationship between God and mankind. There can actually be this open instruction and knowledge of Him. Why? Because of the last line; “For [God] will forgive their iniquity, and [God] will remember their sin no more.” And for the Jewish people, the new covenant was everything. They loved these words. They longed for this. This was their hope. This is what they were looking forward to, their expectation. They knew that this was necessary and what they needed completely because of their separation from God. They knew they had been cut off.

What does Jesus say? This is an “aha” moment. He’s bridging the gap for them now. They’re thinking, why must You die Jesus? You’re the Messiah. Why? We’ve seen You teach. We’ve witnessed all these miracles. You are clearly the Messiah. Why must You die? And Jesus now tells them why. Because the new covenant demands it; it is to bring in this new covenant, this relationship between you and God. It is to offer you forgiveness of sins so you can have that relationship. If you think we’re just making too much of the phrase here that He says which is, “This is my blood of the covenant...”, just look at the next phrase, and you know that He’s referring to the new covenant. In our text, He says, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.” This isn’t just Jesus going down in history as someone that sacrifices life, this is for the sake of benefiting many. It’s “...poured out for many.” His blood will in fact be shed for many sinners who are cut off from God.

This was the expectation for the Messiah. If they read carefully which they had failed to do, if they read carefully the Old Testament and the expectations for the Messiah, He would not just rule and reign as King, He would suffer and die as a servant. Isaiah 53:12; “Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many and makes intercession for the transgressors.” This is the case. This is how the new covenant can actually take place, because of a suffering servant, because of a Messiah that would come and lay down His life. There could be forgiveness of sins. There could be a new covenant, a new relationship with God where He does not count sin against man. This is actually what Jesus alluded to earlier in Mark 10:45 when He said, “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” At this moment, it was clear. At this Passover meal, it was no longer this animal. It was no longer this necessity of some animal sacrificed in blood. It would be His body, His blood, that would bring about a new covenant that they desperately needed.

This is what we remember in communion. We look back to the ultimate sacrifice, not some animal, but the perfect holy One, the Messiah, the suffering servant Jesus the Son of God. Now, naturally, while Jesus, His death, did bring about the new covenant in relationship for man and God, His suffering and death also had other consequences as we come back to our text we see in verse 25, the kingdom suspended - the kingdom suspended.

As we read on in verse 25; “Truly, I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.” Jesus states that very clearly He “...I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.” He now shifts to address the obvious. What about the kingdom? John the Baptist was preaching the kingdom was near. You, Jesus, were preaching the kingdom was near. You told us to preach that the kingdom is near. What about the kingdom? Because we have expectations of the kingdom. We think about what Isaiah wrote. We think about the prophets. We think about the expectations of this glorious kingdom that brings about peace and justice and righteousness upon the earth. What about that? Because this sounds a lot like suffering, death, right? This doesn’t sound good. How does this fit? What about the kingdom? If Jesus is going to die, what about that? What about the kingdom? It’s still this mystery that’s in their minds. They’re still trying to put all the pieces together and see how this all fits. The reality is Jesus answers them. He doesn’t leave this as an outstanding question. He doesn’t leave this as something for them to just be clueless on, but He actually addresses it.

He gives them two realities of the kingdom at this point. First, the kingdom will still be as expected and as described in the Old Testament. He gives them that guarantee that they can expect, the same description of the kingdom in the Old Testament is still on course and still ready to come and manifest itself. How do we know this? Well, look at His words. He says, “I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.” He’s referring to a future day when He will “...drink again of the fruit of the vine...” He will partake in a meal such as this. There will be a peace in the future. This is significant because this is how the Old Testament prophets describes the kingdom. At times, they describe it as a banquet, as a feast for all nations to come. And the wine would be flowing, overflowing. There would be an abundance of food and wine, and this would be a wonderful feast with the Messiah. This is what Isaiah even tells us in Isaiah 25:6; “On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined.” This beautiful description of what to expect in the kingdom, and what does Jesus say here? He says it’s still on. He will drink it new. It will take place in the kingdom of God.

Jesus doesn't say, okay, about that... so, I'm going to die. So, you know what that means? That means everything you thought about the kingdom is now changed completely. It's not true. Right? God said something, but He's going back on His Word. Or, actually, you need to see it a little differently. Ah, it's going to be a little more spiritual. You're going to have lots of food, spiritually speaking, because you're going to have the Bible or something of that nature. That's not what He says. He still has a full expectation that this will take place. Jesus is expecting to drink this and to have this feast in the future.

So, that brings us to the second obvious reality of the kingdom, it appears to be future. It's not then. It's not at that moment. Jesus came. John the Baptist came. The disciples came offering the kingdom and presenting the kingdom. But obviously when Jesus came to His own, His own did not receive. They did not receive Him as king and completely forfeited the kingdom. Well, Jesus says this is future. The kingdom is not off program. It is not off course, and it will just simply be delayed. It will take place in the future. That's why He says; "...until that day..." ... "...until that day..." Jesus still has a full expectation of the kingdom as described in the Word of God, just in the future. If you think about this, this kind of fits well with some of His other teaching. One commentator states, "Jesus' teaching also assumed the kingdom was a future reality. While His disciples expected the kingdom to appear immediately, Jesus changed their expectations by telling them a parable about a ruler who had to leave before he can return to His kingdom (Luke 19:11-27). He described what a good and faithful servant could do in the meantime. Paul spoke of the kingdom as something that could be inherited and that does not perish. These examples testify to the kingdom of God as a future reality." ... "...a future reality."

There they are. They've been experiencing the life of Christ intimately as one of His disciples, wondering how it is that the kingdom would come about, and yet He must die. How do these things fit? And now they have this moment where Jesus has revealed it to them that He must die for their good; that they can have relationship with God, forgiveness of sins, and the new covenant be opened, but the kingdom will be delayed. It is to come. It is future. It has not vanished. It is not abandoned. It is just simply a future reality. Jesus will suffer and die and for a great reason, to bring about relationship between God and mankind and the forgiveness of sin. On the other hand, the kingdom is still the plan. The disciples and we as believers

must still look ahead and wait for His second coming, have anticipation. And we think about how wonderful it is that Jesus does this. Right? At the cost of continually talking about death and bringing depression upon the disciples (we already know this was sorrowful for them) this was the end, and Jesus keeps talking about His need to die. And so, there they are confused, saddened by these realities, yet Jesus brings this phrase in. This is what they need. They need a reminder of the kingdom. They need a reminder that God's not done. They need a reminder that God is still actively working, and this will in fact come true. You don't need to doubt God. You don't need to question His plan and purposes. This kingdom will come to this earth, and it will be just as you expect it to be, a magnificent feast for all nations. Righteousness, peace, justice, this is what they can expect. This gives the disciples hope in the midst of Jesus' suffering that lies before Him.

If Jesus can face ultimate suffering with hope, how much more so should we be able to do the same. If you think about it, this really is the reality of the Christian life, and the reality of communion as we think about it and celebrate it. Right? Every account of The Last Supper, as it kind of describes it for us, is not just simply a reference to His death, but also to His future, the coming of the kingdom. So, there's this aspect of communion, there's this aspect of the gospel where it's almost not enough just to simply look back on the cross and only think of that, we must look back on the cross because that's the only way we have relationship with God. We have to look back on what Christ did because that's where forgiveness of sins even came from in the first place. But at the same time, we have to look ahead. We must look forward to His coming, that hopeful day, the wonderful, the glorious appearing of Christ when the kingdom will be established. This is how we live the Christian life. We look forward as well. We eagerly anticipate. We run a race of faith just like the Old Testament prophets and saints as they were eagerly looking forward to these promises to be fulfilled. We still do the same. We look forward to these words of Christ, these words of even the prophets that have not yet been fulfilled. They will come true, and God will be pleased to see us on that day and say, "Well done, good and faithful servant." This is how the Christian life is lived, thankfully looking back upon the cross, hopefully looking forward to the second coming of our Savior.

Finally, Mark gives us the end of this Passover meal, and we see this transition in verse 26, with the exit and singing in verse 26 - this exit from

their Passover meal that was in Jerusalem and the singing with it. Verse 26; “And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.” ... And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.” We actually can know a little bit about the background of what hymn they probably were singing. It was probably some of the Psalms. Psalms 113-118 were the Hallel Psalms, and those were the Psalms that were traditionally sung during the Passover meal. One commentator states that “The Passover meal was accompanied by the singing of these Psalms Psalm 113-114 before the meal and then Psalm 115-118 after the meal.” What’s worth noting in this is the content of those songs. If we had the time to actually to look at all of them, it’d be wonderful, but just even the last one, Psalm 118. In Psalm 118 some of the content in there that Jesus and these disciples were singing before they exited, and then you know the story, it wouldn’t be too much longer before Judas the betrayer and all the people would come and arrest Him and He would go to His death. But think about Psalm 118:21-24, this is part of what they’re singing as they’re praising God and then exiting the scene; “I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation. The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.”

Do you think, when Jesus was singing these words, He knew who the cornerstone was? Of course, He did. Jesus knew. He knew this was Him. He’s singing about Himself. He’s singing about Himself as this Messiah who is fact “...the cornerstone...” yet rejected by His people. And how does this Psalm go? “This is the Lord's doing [joyfully submitting to His Father’s will]; It is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.” I give you some context to that verse we like to quote often. Right? “This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.” Jesus is singing that, anticipating His death, completely bowed down before His Father’s will, embracing the plan that was before Him, in sovereign control of this as well - and praising God as He marches towards what would be the most evil and wicked event in human history, the crucifixion of the Son of God. This is His attitude; a wonderful, wonderful example for us as Jesus walks through, in every event of His life, walks through suffering, trial, evil, and overcomes all of it with good and righteousness. We see that they go out to the Mount of Olives. This is where they go for this final time together when Jesus will then be arrested. And we

move on to see the final moments of His life. and that's where we will pick up next time.