

# THE FIRST 15

Tuesday, August 6, 2024

Today is Tuesday, August 6 and we are studying what the Bible says about preparing a table.

## OPENING PRAYER

*In the morning, as another day begins, I seek the God who loves me. I quiet my mind, slow my breath and still my body. In these calm moments before the events of the day rush in, I listen for the voice of the Shepherd. He is with me. He calls my name, whispers to my soul and guides my steps. Amen.*

## SCRIPTURE

***While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank from it. "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them. "Truly I tell you, I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." Mark 14:22-25***

## REFLECTION

This week we consider the ancient words of the fifth verse of the 23rd Psalm, "You prepare a table for me in the presence of my enemies." Today a particular table comes to mind. The table of the Lord's Supper. In this past weekend's worship services we shared the sacrament of Holy Communion together. As a shepherd goes ahead of his flock and makes sacrifices to prepare a good table for his sheep in the highlands, our Lord Jesus went ahead for us. At great cost and sacrifice, He prepared a place for us at God's table. He endured the agony of the cross, suffering and death for the redemption of our mortal souls.

The Lord's Supper is a feast of thanksgiving and a remembrance of Him - His body that was broken for us and His blood that was poured out in love for us. It is a permanent ritual reminding us of God's new covenant with humanity - a covenant of salvation bought by the broken body and shed blood of His only Son. When we come to the Lord's table and eat the bread and drink the cup we are united with Christ and with each other. We are offered forgiveness for sin and restored into fellowship with God and one another. We remember the great sacrifice Jesus made for each of us and we dine at a sacred meal - a meal shared around a table of fellowship.

On the night in which he gave Himself up for us, Jesus gathered around a table with His disciples. He knew this was His last sunset and He knew what lay ahead of Him the next day. After He lovingly washed His disciples' feet, they reclined at the table and enjoyed the Passover meal. He took a loaf of bread, gave thanks and broke it. He said, "Take and eat, this is my body given for you, do this in remembrance of me." When the supper was over he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to those who followed Him. He said, "Drink from this all of you, this is my blood of the new covenant poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins, do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me." Again and again we are invited to a table that has been prepared for us by Jesus. At that table we experience Christ's real presence. He is

with us as we partake of the bread and the juice. The new covenant is realized at the table of Jesus Christ.

**Ask:** How have I experienced Christ's presence at the table of the Lord's Supper? How have I remembered His body broken and His blood shed for me?

**Pause and Pray**

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

*Blessed Lord Jesus, my Shepherd and friend, thank You for inviting me to the table of Your love. There is nothing that could ever separate me from Your kindness, goodness and grace. The bread is Your body, given in love for me. The cup is Your blood, willingly shed for the forgiveness of my sin and redemption of my soul. Thank You for Your sacrifice and for preparing a way for me to be reconciled with God and find life everlasting. Amen.*