

Sermon Series: “Teach Us to Pray”—Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield, IN—Holy Thursday 3/28/02

Title: “He Gave Thanks”

Text: Luke 22: 14-20

¹⁴When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. ¹⁵And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. ¹⁶For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God." ¹⁷After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you. ¹⁸For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." ¹⁹And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." ²⁰In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.[NIV]

Intro.:

- *“It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to make music to praise your name, O Most High.” Ps. 92: 1*
- *“Everything you say or do should be done in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.” Colossians 3:17*

Theme: In Jesus’ final meal given for us, he offers a prayer of thanks setting the tone for our lives as God’s children who have had their life redeemed and given back so that we always have reason for thanksgiving.

Giving thanks as we remember God’s past deliverance

- Jesus and the disciples were celebrating with thanks God’s great deliverance of the Passover
 1. **Ills.: Junior confirmation students are thanking God for deliverance from Sunday nights**
 2. At this crossroads of time between Old and New Covenant—Jesus becomes God’s permanent solution for deliverance
- We “remember” Jesus death until he comes (1 Cor. 11:26) and with thanksgiving come together to praise God
 1. Jesus tells us to remember and thank when we celebrate the Lord’s supper
 2. **Ills.: Thanksgiving is a way of life**
- We give thanks in the way we go out from this supper and serve the Lord
 1. Remembering the transformation begun at the cross
 2. A transformation in which we personally participated through our baptism (*“Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. Romans 6: 3-4*)
 3. A transformation brought full circle in this meal as we seek comfort and power to live thank-full lives for Jesus

Giving thanks in the presence of this moment us

- Even when times are tough
 1. It is hard to thank God when tough times are happening
 2. **Ills.: Thankful in every circumstance**
 3. Yet, Jesus knowing that he was about to suffer and die, twice give thanks to God for what he is doing
 4. *“But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.” 2 Cor. 12: 9*
- Because Jesus is with us and always will be
 1. In this Lord’s supper we give thanks because Jesus comes to be with us **RIGHT NOW**
 2. But we are reminded that just as Jesus is able to be present everywhere at all times—he will be with us **TOMORROW**
 3. *“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” Hebrews 13:8*

Giving thanks as we look forward to God’s future plans for

- Because this Lord's supper is a fore-taste of the best which is yet to come
 1. Jesus said, "*I will not eat it again until the kingdom of God comes,*" not as a goodbye but as a promise
- We thank God every time we eat for are reminded of the gift of heaven coming because we are forgiven

Thanksgiving is a way of life

The parents of a young soldier killed in action gave their church a gift of money as a memorial for their son. During the presentation service, the mother of another soldier overseas whispered to her husband, "Let's give the same amount for our son." "What's the matter with you?" he asked. "Our boy hasn't died in battle." "That's just it," the mother replied. "let's give it because he was spared." In giving that reply she showed that she was sensitive to the truth that thanksgiving is a way of life."

Thankful in all circumstances

Too often our gratitude is dependent upon the circumstances of life. A beautiful hymn was written by Martin Rinkart during the thirty-year war to help us look beyond our circumstances and see the hand of God. Rinkart was a pastor in Saxony, Germany as the turbulent years of the war dragged on. For a time he was the only pastor in his town. His pastoral duties caused him to preside at nearly 4500 burials in 1637 alone. In the context of this sad situation and these unfavorable circumstances he penned the words to *Now Thank We All Our God*. It is a hymn of unconditional gratitude to God.

Now thank we all our God
With Heart, hands, and voices
Who wondrous things has done
In whom his world rejoices

Thankful people don't have to have everything going their way to rejoice.