

With Fervent Desire

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References: **Luke 22**, Luke 22:15; John 1:14; John 1:29; Luke 19:10; Luke 22:42; Ephesians 2:8; Luke 22:16; Revelation 19:9; Luke 22:19

Introduction

First of all, my wife sends her greetings. She had purposed in her heart to be with us this morning, but she woke up unwell. So she sends her warm greetings.

I want to wish all the fathers a very happy Father's Day. I think there are many of us who benefited from godly fathers. And yet, if someone did not experience that, what we do have is in heaven. We have the ultimate and the most wonderful Father. Amen. And so, may we always concentrate on that.

Squeezing the Juice of Luke 22:15

I did have a message here in the book of Colossians, and I was going to speak on Colossians now and then a little bit later maybe. But as I was praying, I was very intrigued by Luke chapter 22 and verse 15. I really enjoyed that.

We have a saying in Spanish—and I speak Spanish—and the saying is *sacando el jugo*. That's how you say it. That means you take out all the juice out of the lemon. And so today, with verse 15 of Luke 22, we're just going to really squeeze this, and we're going to go over this passage because I think it is such a wonderful passage, and we can learn some very practical things as well as some of the truths that both our brother Harold and our brother Eric brought out with regard to this particular verse.

Luke chapter 22, verse 15. I'm reading from the English Standard Version. I like all the different emphasis in different versions. And it says—and we know that He's reclining at table with the apostles with Him—and He said to them:

[Luke 22:15 NKJV]

Then He said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer;

And then He goes on and He says a number of other things. But let's take a look at this particular verse. Interestingly, I did have some notes with regard to this verse, and I wanted to point out a few things.

The Intimate Passover Meal

It's interesting, the Lord Jesus here is in the upper room, and on the night before the crucifixion, we really see the shadow of the cross is before Him. The shadow of the cross is before Him. That's an interesting image, isn't it?

Judas has already agreed to betray Him. So that's a fact. That's something that's, as we say in English, the wheels are in motion. And so the religious leaders there are plotting His death, and the Lord Jesus will be arrested. Within a few hours, He will be tried, and sadly, He will be mocked, and He will be beaten, and He will be crucified.

Yet, before He goes through this, He gathers His disciples for this final meal, the Passover. Now, the Passover meal was a meal with His disciples. It was intimate. It wasn't something, you know, big and in a public place. It was intimate. It was with His disciples.

And when He says this, it's been mentioned that—I think it's the King James Version that says—fervently, "with fervent desire" He desired. Here it says "earnestly desired" in the ESV, and maybe in some other versions as well. And the idea behind this is—and apparently it is a Hebrew expression, this "earnestly desired"—it's something that they would have been familiar with, with what the Lord Jesus had to say. So it reveals the heart of the Lord Jesus. It shows His love. And the idea is that He says, "I have greatly longed. I have desired with all my heart."

When someone says something to you like that—they say, "I have greatly longed to see you. I have greatly longed to be with you"—you never have a bad feeling when someone says that to you, right? Never. The Lord Jesus said that to them. And so, what we see is the heart of love of the Lord Jesus and His purpose and His desire for fellowship with His disciples, with His people.

Now, there are three things I wanted to extract from this:

1. First of all, He **desired fellowship with His disciples**.

2. But He also **desired to fulfill God's plan of redemption.**

3. And thirdly, the Lord Jesus Christ, God Himself manifested in the flesh by the power of the Holy Spirit, **desires still to have fellowship with His people today.**

I really believe that's why the Lord Jesus instituted this particular meeting and gave us a very clear ordinance to remember Him. He desires that fellowship when everything is set aside, and we can intimately enjoy this with Him.

Desiring Fellowship with His Disciples

Now, desiring the fellowship with the disciples—it's quite remarkable. There are a few things that we can look at. Judas would betray the Lord Jesus. That was known. Peter would deny the Lord Jesus. These were things that were going to take place. The disciples, they would run away. They would scatter. And also, the cross was awaiting the Lord Jesus. These four things were things that were going to take place. And yet the Lord Jesus says, "I fervently," or "I earnestly," or "I eagerly, I greatly long to be with you," with the knowledge of these things. It really is quite remarkable.

Now, what did the Lord Jesus Christ do for His disciples? He taught them. He invested in them, right? He corrected them. He gave them instructions. He loved them. He prayed for them. Our brother read in John chapter 17; He prayed for His disciples. And now the greatest trial of His earthly life was coming upon Him, and He wanted one last meal with them.

Jesus delights to be with His people. I love what Eric had to say. He said He loved them. He was sociable. He was desiring to be with His disciples. We see this throughout Scripture. God walked with Adam and Eve in the garden. We see that part of God's character. We see that when they wandered through the wilderness, God dwelt with them in the tabernacle. He desired to be with His people, and He visibly displayed it—a pillar of fire by night, a cloud by day. He constantly was showing His presence to His people. And they could see that tabernacle, that place where God dwelt with His people.

And then finally, the Lord Jesus Himself came. God manifested in the flesh in the incarnation, came in and dwelt among us. In John chapter 1, verse 14—we don't need to turn there, but it says:

[John 1:14 NKJV]

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Isn't that wonderful? He dwelt among us. So that's what we see.

And, you know, sometimes believers, they may struggle with the idea that God truly wants to spend time with them. I don't know. Sometimes people struggle. I spoke to someone earlier this week, and I said, "You know, I really enjoy spending time with you." And this person looked at me and said, "Really?" I said, "Yes. I enjoy this. You're not a trouble. You're not difficult to be with. I enjoy being with you." And I'll tell you, they got emotional about it. Right? I'm not sure if I'm that great of company, but boy, it made me feel good, and they felt good.

Well, that's how it is with the Lord. He wants that fellowship with you and me. Look, He desires fellowship with us, not because we're perfect, but because He loves us. That's why He desires to have fellowship with us.

Desiring to Fulfill God's Plan of Redemption

We can also think about this Passover meal, and it's not just a farewell dinner. It wasn't just that. You know what it was? It was the fact that it points us to something much greater. The purpose of this time was to point us to something much greater from the Lord.

The original Passover took place in Egypt, right? And God instructed Israel at that time: "You must sacrifice a lamb, apply blood to the doorposts," as we have been reminded, but also to enjoy and eat the Passover meal. When judgment came, we know what took place, and they were spared. But we know that the Passover was looking forward to the Lord Jesus Christ. And in John chapter 1 and verse 29, it says there:

[John 1:29 NKJV]

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

So Jesus desired the Passover because it was the moment when the symbols—because He was preparing the bread and the wine—would become a reality for the believers. They would understand this. And we today understand that symbolism and that truth that was being pointed to us way back when they were leaving Egypt, leaving the slavery. He said, "This is a symbol of freedom. This is a symbol of redemption. These things signify what I desire with you."

As we remember, one of the things I've mentioned many times in the past—I was recalling talking to someone about the breaking of bread. We were talking about it, and I said to them once, there had been some time that had passed since I had broken bread, a number of years ago. Not because I was away from the Lord or anything like that; it was just my schedule, the way it had been, just didn't allow me to have time to spend here remembering the Lord. And I remember coming and meeting with the Lord's people and breaking bread that first time, and I remember sitting in just a seat like yourself, and I started weeping. And I was surprised at myself. I realized I had missed it—the deep, beautiful intimacy with the Lord.

It doesn't mean that every brother here has participated, or that you enjoy it less. It doesn't mean the sisters enjoy it less. What it is, is God is looking for that openness of heart and that desire for intimacy as we remember His death, His burial, His resurrection, and the purpose.

The Passover is a wonderful symbol, and the emblems lead us to understand the Lord Jesus Christ because what we see in the Lord Jesus is that He was the true Passover Lamb. He was about to give His life for us. And Jesus was not a victim of circumstances. What it is, is that He was moving in a deliberate way towards the cross. And that's something that you and I can truly appreciate—that He made that deliberate choice of saying very clearly:

[Luke 22:42 NKJV]

saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done."

And so what we see in Luke's Gospel is that the Lord Jesus understood very clearly why He came. In fact, He says in Luke 19 that He came to seek and to save the lost:

[Luke 19:10 NKJV]

for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

It was God's eternal plan. We can truly enjoy that.

When we look at Calvary, we see the willing love of the Lord Jesus Christ. He didn't go reluctantly to the cross. What we see is that He embraced this task, this task of the cross that God the Father had laid upon Him. What does the cross reveal to us? It tells us about God's justice against sin, and God's love for sinners:

[Ephesians 2:8 NKJV]

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

And it's God's provision for salvation—those wonderful things.

Desiring Fellowship with Us Today

As we close, let's think about the third thing: Jesus still desires fellowship with us today. He still desires that. Luke chapter 22, verse 15 reveals not only what Jesus desired, but what He desires even today with you and me. He says—I tell you, in verse 16, what does He say?

[Luke 22:16 NKJV]

for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

So this points towards a future feast, which has been alluded to. I'm looking forward to that feast. I have no idea what it's going to be like. I don't. But I think it will be far greater than our imagination, far greater than I can imagine.

You know how sometimes we have expectations? I remember when I was a little boy, my sisters—I have three older sisters—and we decided in the backyard that we were going to make a car. Now, I envisioned us driving around. And what did they do? They got some ropes and they put them around, and we put four little chairs in there, and now we rode far. You know, my expectations were completely different, but that's a child, right? Well, I'll tell you, it's going to be the reverse in heaven. The expectation that we have, the limited imagination that we have, is tiny in comparison to what God has for us.

So what we see is that we have something to look forward to. The Bible calls it:

[Revelation 19:9 NKJV]

Then he said to me, "Write: "Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!" And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."

What a wonderful day. When Jesus gave His life on the cross, it wasn't just for the cross—He was always looking forward to seeing redemption become complete because of what Christ has done.

What do we have to look forward to? There will be no more sin, no more death, no more sorrow, no more separation from the ones we love and from, obviously, the Lord Himself. Those are great things to look forward to. You know what it will be? It will also be absolutely perfect fellowship with Christ when we are in heaven with Him. We look forward to that. So when He says "ferently desires," remember we are part of that plan, part of that group, part of that whole multitude that will enjoy the perfect fellowship with God the Father, the Son, and the Spirit of God enveloped.

A New Paragraph Every Sunday

I'm encouraged by this verse. I just appreciate, brother, that you brought it out, and I had some notes that I looked up, and I thought, "This is such a beautiful, beautiful verse."

What does the Lord's Supper remind us of? There are some realities. We look back—we have remembered the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, as we were reminded:

[Luke 22:19 NKJV]

And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

It's not a ritual. It's fresh every Sunday—fresh ideas, fresh things that we're reminded of and encouraged with.

What do we do? We look within. We examine our hearts. Where are we at in our personal walk with the Lord?

We look forward. We anticipate the fellowship with the Father, looking forward to the marriage supper of the Lamb, and to be in eternal union with God.

What do we see? A love, a love for His disciples. He was a people person. I love that. He was sociable. He enjoys fellowship with us. There was purpose.

Until that day, let us continue to respond to the Lord. Let us continue to respond to His invitation of coming here on a Sunday morning to remember Him because He ferently desires fellowship. He earnestly, He has a great longing to be with us.

I've always looked at this particular meeting as the beginning of a paragraph. And then the week goes by, and that paragraph ends and a new paragraph starts. That's what it is. And for each one of us, God is writing the book, so to speak. And it's chapter one and chapter two, and there are different paragraphs. Every time we come, a new paragraph starts. And in that paragraph was what we experienced during the week—the highs and the lows of life, the ups and the downs, the moments of maybe sadness, maybe the moments of joy. But underneath all that is the Lord—earnestly, fervently, eagerly, greatly longing to be with us. I'm so, so grateful. His invitation allows us to be grateful and also obedient to what His request is.

Closing Prayer

Let's pray.

Father, thank You for these moments. We thank You for the beautiful intimacy of this supper that He had with His disciples. We can peek in, we can peer in and look and see what the Lord Jesus said to His disciples, knowing what His destiny was—that cruel hill, Golgotha, where He laid down His life. And as that hymn says, "If that isn't love, then heaven's a myth. There's no feeling like this."

Oh God, thank You for saving our souls. Be with us now as we enjoy our time together, fellowshiping, enjoying a cup of coffee, and as we go into the family Bible hour and Sunday school and all the activities. May Christ be exalted in our speech, in our fellowship, and in our friendship. In Jesus' precious and most worthy name, Amen.