

Last Supper Discussion

Richard B. Sorensen, www.unholygrailbook.com

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Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that his hour had come... having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

~ John 13:1

After Jesus and his disciples had eaten of the bread and drank from the cup, they cleared off the table. Then they all drank the traditional fourth and last cup of Seder wine.

Jesus again spoke, “The bread and wine represent a new covenant, a new agreement that God the Father is making with humanity. The old agreement consisted of many rules for behavior—what you could and could not do, as you have read in the Torah. The new agreement is concerned instead with the mind and heart, with how you think, because thought precedes action. The old agreement said ‘do this and do not do that’; but the new agreement says, ‘think in this way and not in that.’ If your thoughts are right, your actions also will be right. The old agreement required obedience, but the requirement for the new agreement is love. The one who truly loves fulfills both the old and the new.”

Jesus paused for a moment to allow the apostles to digest what he had just said.

“What do you mean by ‘love?’” asked Thomas.

“Love as I have loved you. The true test of love is serving people. When you serve others, you are serving God.”

“Does this mean that we just give up our lives before our enemies? Allow them to destroy us?” exclaimed Thomas.

“Not at all,” Jesus replied. “You have seen me rebuke the religious leaders. Love also involves opposing that which is wrong and those who do it. Some will tolerate all evils in the name of a false love and then accuse you of lacking love when you oppose evil. Such people do not understand love. But love also means that you forgive others and do not hold grudges; that you carefully examine your motives, so that as far as it depends on you, to live in peace with all. When evil threatens to overcome it may be necessary to fight, but remember that your purpose is not to kill and tear down, but rather to love and build up.”

“But Lord,” objected Thomas, “what you are asking is very difficult. No one could keep even the old covenant; how then shall we ever hope to keep this new one?”

“You cannot,” said Jesus. “It is impossible.”

“Why then are we asked to do the impossible?”

“You are not being asked to do the impossible. You will be selfish, will do wrong, and your love will sometimes fail—that is what my sacrifice is intended to cover and why my death is so important. The real issue, after you have failed and have been forgiven, is whether you get back up again and continue on in love. This is why you need the power of my Spirit, the Holy Spirit, because you cannot do this alone. He will be sent to guide you and help you.”

“Yes, but Lord,” Thomas continued, “many are weak and willful. What if we only partially live by this new covenant? And what of those who go their own way—what will happen to such people?”

Jesus replied, “Everyone who truly desires to serve God and actually does so in love will obtain a reward from God, even if the service was small and halting. A person’s reward shall be in proportion to his service—he who did little shall receive little, and he who did much shall receive much. But to those who served only themselves, or who lied and only served with their lips, I will say, ‘Depart from me, I never knew you.’ In that day there will be many surprises—some who were little known here will be famous for eternity, and many who were great and powerful will be damned forever. God the Father knows everything, and all of the actions and motives of every heart will be revealed. Therefore the judgment of God will be right and true, and whatever a man has truly sown in this life, he will surely reap in the next. Those who are faithful until death will be given the crown of life.”