

The Place of Eating in the Life of a Christian

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • May 1, In the year of our Lord Christ, 2022

Scripture Reader and Reading: Bryan Rich – Luke 22.14–16

Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Larry Amberg – Sermons on Fellowship

Prelude:

I. For what do we give thanks the most?

A. For what do we plan the most, at leasts the women in the family?

B. For what do we anticipate three times a day?

1. I am going to guess that it is our food.

II. I want to show you today

A. that eating occupies some great places in the life of a child of God.

B. You might be surprised to see

1. that eating is associated with some major events and experiences, which

2. should move us to have the same experiences that I will show you.

III. From the Garden of Eden in the early chapters of the Book of Genesis

A. to heaven in the closing chapters of the Book of Revelation,

B. God shows the special place that food occupies in our lives.

Persuasion:

I. The First Command, Prohibition, and Sin

A. Among the first things that God told Adam that he wanted him to do

1. was to take care of the Garden of Eden,

2. saying also that he could eat from any tree, but

a) at the same time

b) God also gave Adam the first prohibition:

15 Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in

the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

– Genesis 2.15–17

B. You know what happened next.

1. It was through *food*
2. that the serpent tempted Eve:

1 Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’?”

– Genesis 3.1

C. After the serpent persuaded her to eat of that tree,

1. Moses showed us
 - a) what Eve thought and
 - b) what she did:

6 So when the woman saw that the tree was *good for food*, that it was *pleasant to the eyes*, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

– Genesis 3.6

2. Adam
 - a) put up no argument and
 - b) ate along with her.

D. God

1. created us with the need for food, and
2. created our food that meets our needs perfectly.

E. However, as the incident in the Garden of Eden shows

1. food can be a most blessed experience, or

2. it can be our downfall.

II. Elders Eating with God

A. Can you describe to me a more thrilling experience

1. than seeing God *and*
2. eating in his presence?
 - a) Actually, I will show you something later
 - b) that I believe will equal and even surpass such an experience.

B. From Exodus 24,

1. picture Moses, and
2. some others from Israel
 - a) having an experience that we can only dream of having:

9 Then Moses went up, also Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, 10 and they saw the God of Israel. And there was under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and it was like the very heavens in its clarity. 11 But on the nobles of the children of Israel He did not lay His hand. So they saw God, *and they ate and drank.*

– Exodus 24.9–11

- b) Imagine
 - (1) seeing God with a pavement of sapphire stone under him, and
 - (2) seeing yourself eating in his presence!
 - (a) How honored would you feel?
 - (b) You would have experienced the most blessed privileges of all.

III. Jesus Ate with Tax Collectors and Sinners

A. We eat with family and friends, but

1. eating with undesirables says
 - a) I want to be friends with you, or

- b) I want you to be part of my family,
- 2. which is precisely what Jesus communicated
 - a) when he ate with tax collectors and sinners.
 - b) Do you remember what situation set up the parables of
 - (1) the lost sheep,
 - (2) the lost coin, and
 - (3) the prodigal son?

1 Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. 2 And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, "This Man receives sinners and eats with them."

– Luke 15.1–2

- (a) Tax collectors worked for the Roman government, and
 - i) the Jews would have considered them traitors.
- (b) Sinners would be people who
 - i) either made their living through a sin
 - (1) (drug dealers, harlots), or
 - ii) sin just characterized their lives
 - (1) (alcohol, drugs, robbers).

B. Do you think

- 1. that if Jesus were here today,
- 2. he would want to eat with you or at your house?
 - a) I think he would.
 - b) Here is why I think that way.

29 Then Levi gave Him a great feast in his own house. And there were a great number of tax collectors and others who sat down with them.

– **Luke 5.29**

(1) Not only was Levi (we know him as Matthew), a tax collector, but

(2) Jesus went to his house for a meal.

(a) How would you like for the Son of God

(b) to come to your house to eat?

c) Remember Zacchaeus?

5 And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, “Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house.”

– **Luke 19.5**

C. Jesus came to save lost souls, and

1. to accomplish such a goal,

2. he would have to show people

a) that he accepts them.

b) What better way to show someone

(1) that you accept him

(2) than eating with him?

D. Luke 14 shows Jesus teaching

1. that we should also include people in our meals

2. who might be undesirable or

3. who cannot pay us back:

12 Then He also said to him who invited Him, “When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid. 13 But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. 14 And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.”

– Luke 14.12–14

E. As disciples of Jesus Christ,

1. eating with people is not an option,
2. it is part of what we are and of what we do.

IV. A Sign of Conversion

A. Acts 2 shows a remarkable change of heart

1. in those who had demanded the crucifixion of Jesus.
2. After learning what to do to be saved,
 - a) they were baptized, but
 - b) did they repent?

44 Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, 45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. 46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

– Acts 2.44–47

- (1) Does that seem like the same crowd
- (2) that demanded Pilate crucify Jesus?
 - (a) Notice how they shared things,
 - (b) in particular
 - i) that they broke bread from house to house and
 - ii) ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart.
3. Eating with one another showed
 - a) that they had converted to Christ,

- b) that they had repented along with being baptized.
 - (1) Instead of taking a man's life,
 - (2) they wanted to give to others.
- B. They practiced hospitality.

1. Wes McAdams:

“The Greek word that we translate ‘hospitality’ (see Romans 12:13; Hebrews 13:2) is ‘philoxenia.’ It is a combination of the words, ‘phileō’ (love) and ‘xenos’ (stranger). Real hospitality is about taking care of strangers. Notice that ‘philoxenia’ shares a root word with, ‘xenophobia,’ (fear of strangers). Hospitality is the exact opposite of xenophobia.”

- 2. Show the Lord and the world
 - a) that you have converted to Christ
 - b) by eating with others and sharing.

V. The Spiritual Meal

- A. Think about one of the last things
 - 1. that the Lord wanted to do with his disciples.
 - 2. He shared the Passover meal with them.
 - a) Why would he even want to eat?
 - b) What if you knew
 - (1) that tomorrow
 - (a) men are going to
 - i) beat you,
 - ii) slap you,
 - iii) scourge you, and
 - iv) crucify you,
 - (b) would you want to eat the night before?
 - (2) Eating with his disciples meant more to him than almost anything.

B. Jesus had desired earnestly to eat that Passover with them:

14 When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. 15 Then He said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; 16 for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

– Luke 22.14–16

1. The next meal that he would eat with them
2. would be in the kingdom
 - a) in the form of the Lord's Supper.
 - b) Matthew 26 shows that he eats with us.

27 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. 28 For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. 29 But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."

– Matthew 26.27–29

- (1) Every time you eat the Lord's Supper,
- (2) Jesus participates with you.

VI. Jesus Will Serve Us

A. Luke 12 records a teaching of Jesus

1. that preserves a magnificent promise he made.
2. We talked about having Jesus in our home for a meal.
 - a) Now listen to another experience of a meal with Jesus
 - b) that he promises will happen:

35 "Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; 36 and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. 37 Blessed are those servants whom the master,

when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you *that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them.*

– Luke 12.35–37

B. Did you catch what Jesus said and promised?

1. I understand that this is a parable, but
2. it speaks of some kind of experience
 - a) where he will serve us, and
 - b) he used a servant at a meal
 - (1) to give us an idea of what *he* will do.
 - (2) The Bible does picture eating in heaven:

2 In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

– Revelation 22.2

C. Imagine being in the Upper Room with Jesus and the twelve, and

1. watching him wash the feet of the 12, and then
2. he comes to you and washes your feet.
 - a) He is gone.
 - b) We cannot have him wash our feet today.
 - (1) However, the time approaches when
 - (2) he will seat us at a table in heaven, and then,
 - (a) now picture this in your mind,
 - (b) he will serve us!

Exhortation:

I. Here is the clincher:

- A. To have these experiences
- B. we have to be friends of Jesus.
 - 1. If someone is not a friend of Jesus
 - 2. that person will not receive an invite from him.

II. How then do you become a friend of Jesus?

14 “You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.”

– John 15.14

- A. To sit at his table,
- B. we have to bring our lives into harmony with him, and
 - 1. we do that by the help of his grace.
 - 2. You confess his Lordship, and
 - a) you show his Lordship
 - b) by doing what he says:

46 “But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?”

– Luke 6.46