

# Come to the table

Maundy Thursday 2021

## Psalm 23 :4-5

<sup>4</sup> Even though I walk  
through the darkest valley,  
I will fear no evil,  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff,  
they comfort me.

<sup>5</sup> You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies.  
You anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.

We often think of the 'table' being prepared for us in heaven. The heavenly banquet. But what about the table – right here, right now? A table of blessing.

The table speaks of welcome, sharing, placing worth on 'being with' one another and with God. Speaking to someone of Jewish heritage recently, they said that if they were bringing a friend home their mother would say "I'll set a table for them". Food was central to a loving welcome.

And we normally celebrate significant events around a table, sharing food, sharing stories and memories or talking about the future.

One of the many difficult realities of the pandemic for those who have lost loved ones, whether to Covid or other reasons, has been the fact that they can't be together after the funeral. There hasn't been that space to gather around a table – to share, to cry, to laugh.

Today, we are invited to the table. The event we know as the last Supper happened at a significant meal. A meal that marked the 'Passover' and the start of Israel's journey to freedom. As Jesus celebrated the meal with his disciples, we too are invited to come to this table tonight. To listen to the words of Jesus – to be with him and to be blessed.



## Sidewalk Prophets – 'Come to the table'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=umjG9mVGI5o>

We all start on the outside  
The outside looking in  
This is where grace begins  
We were hungry we were thirsty  
With nothing left to give  
Oh the shape that we were in  
Just when all hope seemed lost  
Love opened the door for us  
He said come to the table  
Come join the sinners who have  
been redeemed  
Take your place beside the Saviour  
Sit down and be set free

Come to the table

Come meet this mighty crew of  
misfits  
These liars and these thieves  
There's no one unwelcome here  
So that sin and shame that you  
brought with you

You can leave it at the door  
Let mercy draw you near  
Come to the table  
Come join the sinners who have  
been redeemed  
Take your place beside the Saviour

Sit down and be set free  
Come to the table  
Come to the table

To the thief and to the doubter  
To the hero and the coward  
To the prisoner and the soldier  
To the young and to the older  
All who hunger all who thirst  
All the last and all the first  
All the paupers and the princess  
All who fail you've been forgiven  
All who dream and all who suffer  
All who loved and lost another

All the chained and all the free  
All who follow all who lead  
Anyone who's been let down  
All the lost you have been found  
All who have been labelled right or  
wrong  
To everyone who hears this song  
Come to the table  
Come join the sinners you have  
been redeemed  
Take your place beside the Saviour  
Sit down and be set free

Sit down and be set free  
Come to the table  
Come to the table  
Just sit down and rest a while  
Just sit down and rest a while  
Come to the table

So as we are invited to the table and as we come to the table, we expect to be blessed – **he** has set this table before us.

But before we move on let's acknowledge this table is in a difficult space/time in our lives.

### Light a candle



- pray for those who mourn
- those who feel lonely or abandoned
- those who are facing financial hardship
- those who have worked tirelessly.

## What do we see at the table? The blessing of meekness.

### John 13:1-17

**13** It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

<sup>2</sup> The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. <sup>3</sup> Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; <sup>4</sup> so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel round his waist. <sup>5</sup> After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped round him.

<sup>6</sup> He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?'

<sup>7</sup> Jesus replied, 'You do not realise now what I am doing, but later you will understand.'

<sup>8</sup> 'No,' said Peter, 'you shall never wash my feet.'

Jesus answered, 'Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.'

<sup>9</sup> 'Then, Lord,' Simon Peter replied, 'not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!'

<sup>10</sup> Jesus answered, 'Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you.' <sup>11</sup> For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

<sup>12</sup> When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. 'Do you understand what I have done for you?' he asked them. <sup>13</sup> 'You call me "Teacher" and "Lord", and rightly so, for that is what I am. <sup>14</sup> Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. <sup>15</sup> I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. <sup>16</sup> Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. <sup>17</sup> Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.



At the table we observe where blessing takes place. Jesus (who knew that the Father had put all things under his power) – takes on the ‘position’ and the role of the servant.

His status, his value, his worth – came from his loving relationship with his Father – not from external accolades.

In Matthew 5:5 Jesus says, “Blessed are the meek for they will inherit the earth”.

We are blessed when our right relationship with God enables us to find pleasure in ‘giving to’ the world rather than ‘taking from’ it. In that way we inherit so much of what God’s good creation has to offer.

### ***To pause and ponder.***

Where do I derive my sense of status and value from?

To be ‘meek’ is not weak, it is to allow our relationship with God to empower us to be generous with who we are in the world in which we live.

Consider the opportunities we have to give ourselves away to others.

### **Graham Kendrick – ‘Meekness and Majesty’**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qXggFYQQTJO>

Meekness and majesty  
manhood and deity  
In perfect harmony the Man  
who is God

Lord of eternity dwells in  
humanity  
Kneels in humility and washes  
our feet

O what a mystery meekness  
and majesty  
Bow down and worship for this  
is your God  
This is your God

Father's pure radiance perfect  
in innocence

Yet learns obedience to death  
on a cross

Suffering to give us life  
Conquering through sacrifice  
And as they crucify prays  
Father forgive

O what a mystery meekness  
and majesty  
Bow down and worship for this  
is your God  
This is your God

Wisdom unsearchable God the  
invisible

Love indestructible in frailty  
appears

Lord of infinity stooping so  
tenderly  
Lifts our humanity to the  
heights of His throne

O what a mystery meekness  
and majesty  
Bow down and worship for this  
is your God  
This is your God  
This is your God

Jesus, you kneel before me  
You remove my shoes and I am exposed  
My feet are grimy  
full of calluses and cracks  
pungent with sweat  
I'm embarrassed by them  
I pull back but you reassure  
You're not offended

I feel welcome in your hands  
vulnerable, yet safe

The cleansing begins  
I see your reflection in the ripples  
I see me, too  
Your water brings truth and life  
Who I am and who I can be

I am whole and home in the touch of the towel  
You look at my neighbour and hand it to me

## What do we see at the table? The blessing of salvation.

### Luke 22:14-20

<sup>14</sup> When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. <sup>15</sup> And he said to them, 'I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. <sup>16</sup> For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfilment in the kingdom of God.'

<sup>17</sup> After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, 'Take this and divide it among you. <sup>18</sup> For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.'

<sup>19</sup> And 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.'

<sup>20</sup> In 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.'

The table you are invited to is a table of salvation.

As we hear Jesus' words we are reminded of the great personal suffering and pain that Jesus bore.

### **To pause and ponder.**

*As we sit at the table we humbly acknowledge the cost of our salvation.*

*'This is my body given for you.' 'This is my blood poured out for you.'*

*As we sit at the table we receive and enjoy the fulness of our salvation.*

*'I have come that you may receive life to the full.'*

### **'Broken for me, Broken for you'**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TBrCuqWKh7g>

Broken For Me, Broken For You,  
The Body Of Jesus, Broken For You.

He Offered His Body, He Poured Out His Soul;  
Jesus Was Broken, That We Might Be Whole:

Broken For Me, Broken For You,  
The Body Of Jesus, Broken For You.

Come To My Table And With Me Dine;  
Eat Of My Bread And Drink Of My Wine.

Broken For Me, Broken For You,  
The Body Of Jesus, Broken For You.

This Is My Body Given For You;  
Eat It Remembering I Died For You.

Broken For Me, Broken For You,  
The Body Of Jesus, Broken For You.

Blessed are you, Lord God.  
The basin and the towel are signs to us of your Son's servanthood.  
You have made us partakers of Christ and of one another.  
As we go forth, give us grace  
to count others more important than ourselves,  
to love our enemies,  
to make peace.

Send the Spirit of truth to keep alive in us  
what Jesus taught and did,  
that our words may carry his good news, and  
that our lives may bear the shape of the cross  
of the One who lives and reigns with You  
and with the Holy Spirit,  
One God, forever and ever. Amen.