

Christ seeking a guest chamber

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[0 : 00] For a little time as we meditate together in a portion of the chapter we read. Luke's Gospel, Chapter 22, and words we have in the 11th verse.

Luke 22, and the question posed in the 11th verse. Where is the guest chamber? For I shall eat the Passover with my disciples.

The Lord's ministry in the world was reaching towards the climax at this particular point.

The purpose for which he came was about to be accomplished. The Lamb of God was shortly to make himself an offering for sin. He was to allow himself to be taken as a lamb to the slaughter and a sheep before her shearers is done.

But before that hour struck. There were certain matters that had to be attended to. He would continue on his way as if nothing entoward was about to happen.

[1 : 10] The Jewish religious festivals would all be observed in a few order and nothing would be overlooked by him.

But unknown to his followers at this point, those festivals were about to be superseded. For after his death, there would be no further need for them.

After all, the Passover lamb which was offered every year was not only intended at a backward glance, but at a forward glance as well.

The Passover lamb called to the coming of God. Who would take away the sin of the world. And so the Lord looked for a suitable guest chamber where he would partake for the last time of the Passover.

and in the process institute a replacement for it, namely the Lord's, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which will be observed by his people and in his church until the end of time.

[2 : 18] And the verses following in this chapter, they go on to recount for us what actually happened there on that occasion. And so he gives this question to his disciples, where is the guest chamber where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples?

Now this morning, in view of the dispensing of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, in our own midst, next Lord's Day, I'm going to allow my imagination a certain amount of liberty without my trust departing from the safe anchorage of the divine word.

And I'm going to suppose that the Lord is posing this very question to us, to you and to me, where is the guest chamber where I shall eat the Passover, the supper, if you will, with my disciples, with my followers?

As he said to his followers so long ago, he is saying the same to his people today, with desire, with great desire, I have desired to eat this Passover, this supper, with you.

He delights in the company of his believing people. It gives them unbounded pleasure to preside over them when they seek to give obedience to his commandments, to remember his death till he comes.

[3 : 49] And so keeping this thought before our minds that the Lord is posing this question to us, where is the guest chamber where I shall eat the Passover, the supper with my disciples?

I would suggest first of all that the believing guest chamber is a commodious, well-ordered, and superbly furnished place.

For the divine hand has been at work in that place. The guest chamber, remember, the guest chamber of the believing life is established in the electing love of God himself.

And as the apostle says in 2 Thessalonians 2, verse 13, we are bound to give thanks to God for this, because God hath from the beginning a chosen neutral salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.

It is a matter for thanksgiving, for gratitude on the part of every child of God. And in Ephesians 1, the apostle, you remember, expresses his thankfulness to God as he recounts this fact also.

[5 : 05] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, because, as it is, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him, in love having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will to the praise of the glory of his grace.

It is on this theme also, the believers, a movable standing in the love of God in Christ, that that great eighth chapter of the epistle to the Romans reaches its crescendo, for whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate, to be conformed to the image of his Son.

And whom he did predestinate, then he also called. And whom he called, then he also justified. And whom he justified, then he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things?

And then, who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Who is able to move us from this foundation upon which we have been established?

So you see, the believing guest chamber is established in the electing love of God. This is the reason for thanksgiving and for thank offering. And then too, the believing guest chamber is erected with the divine material of grace.

[6 : 35] Remember how, what the believer was by nature, and what he became by grace is vividly portrayed for us in Paul's letter to the Ephesians in the second chapter, wherein it is eighth in time past, he walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works good in the children of disobedience and hung home also with y'all had a conversation in times past, in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and where by nature the children of wrath even of others, but then at verse 4, he goes on to point out the great contrast, the vast contrast, but he says, God, but God, who is rich in mercy for his great love, wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened us together with Christ, by grace you are saved, and has raised us up together and made us fit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, for by grace shall he be saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.

And the very same thought is given prominence in the letter to Titus in verse 3, for we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, as the apostle, disobedient, deceived, serving divers' lust and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

But he goes on, the contrast again, after that the kindness and love of God, our Savior, toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness that we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.

So you see, the believing guest chamber is erected with the divine material of grace, and this is reason for thanksgiving and for gratitude to the God of all grace.

But then we have to say also, are we not, that the believing guest chamber is furnished with the person of the Holy Spirit, for the Holy Spirit takes up his residence in the redeemed life and he makes it into his own temple to dwell therein in order to beautify it and make it meet for the master's use.

[9 : 08] Know ye not, as the apostle in 1 Corinthians 3, know ye not that he are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you, and then in chapter 6 of 1 Corinthians, what is it?

What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price?

Therefore, because of this, we ought to look for the graces of the Spirit in such a temple, in such a life, and the fruits of the Spirit, which are, as the apostle says in Galatians chapter 5, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

these are some of the furnishings with which he graces and beautifies the believing guest chamber, so that it would be worthy of the great name which it bears, and a fit habitation for God, a fit habitation for its Lord and for its Master, and the believer has to constantly exert himself in the direction in which the Spirit of God leads him, so as to show forth those fruits.

He is to walk in the Spirit and not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. When he resists or withstands or opposes the leadings of the Spirit of God, then the Spirit will be grieved and is honored and will in a measure withdraw his gracious influence from his life.

[10 : 58] The believing guest chamber then is furnished with the divine person of the Holy Spirit. And remember, too, that the believing guest chamber is maintained by the almighty hand of God, for this is the alone guarantee that it will continue as his guest chamber in spite of appearance is to the contrary from time to time.

It was a knowledge of this that filled Paul the Apostle with confidence at the thought of the Christians at Philippi and wrote encouragingly to them, being confident he says of this very thing, that he which has commenced a good work in you will perform it to the day of Jesus Christ.

The hand of God is upon you. It is the hand of God that will bring forth his own work in you. And the Apostle Peter likewise blesses God for having begotten his people again into a lively hope to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away and that are as it is in chapter 1 verse 5 kept by the power of God through faith and to salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

the grace of God is sufficient for all the needs of his people and his strength is perfected in their weakness.

Most gladly therefore says the Apostle will I rather glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me. And so then the believing guest chamber is indeed a commodious well-ordered and superbly furnished place and we are always to bear this in mind as we think upon the work of God in the source of his people.

[12 : 57] But in passing on to second place we are also to notice that the believing guest chamber must frequently be attended to so as to befit its divine master.

it must be frequently attended to so as to befit its divine master. And scripture calls on us to give diligent attention to this matter in our lives.

For one thing remember that the interior of the believing guest chamber must be kept clean. The prayer of David the psalmist you remember in Psalm 51 was create in me a clean heart O God and renew a right spirit within me because as he says in verse 6 thou desirest truth in the inward part and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

Frequent attention has to be given to the inner unseen man of God. It is here that the battle is fought and won. For this reason the man of God must never neglect the scriptural task of examining himself especially in the light of a duty such as commemorating the Lord's death.

Let a man examine himself and so let him eat of this bread and drink of this cup and when he has engaged himself diligently and prayerfully and devoutly in this direction he will he must conclude that the business is too much for him and the task is too great for him and so he will pray search me oh God and know my heart try me and know my thoughts and see if there be any wicked way in me and lead me in a way everlasting.

[14 : 51] The interior of the believing guest chamber must be kept clean. And remember too that the exterior of the believing guest chamber must be blameworthy.

One of the first tasks you remember in which the savior engaged here in the upper room was to take a basin a towel and wash the begrimed feet of his disciples and when one of them objected his answer was if I wash thee not thou hast no part with me.

He was teaching them the lesson that in their walk and in their conduct they were constantly sinning even anode for themselves. They were sinning against light and against his law.

There wasn't a day there wasn't a moment of any day when they were not falling short at some point or another and therefore they needed to make regular excursions to the fountain opened for uncleanness and for sin.

Jesus is impressing on us here the necessity of a holy and careful walk that we should pay the closest attention to all our actions in the course of living.

[16 : 08] The believing life is the guest chamber of the Holy Spirit as we observed a moment ago and we are to pay the closest attention to our walk and even then we are to see cleansing from his hand lest we defile the temple of God for the temple of God is intended to be holy.

Be holy for I am holy and so its exterior must be blameworthy. But then to remember that the sittings of the believing guest chamber must be kept in good order and one sometimes one dirty over indulgence in God's good gifts to us is not the reason why there is so much physical disorder in our society.

Taking Western society generally and our own nation in particular this would certainly appear to be the case. The emphasis as you know is on consuming.

We are a consumer society and every encouragement is given to people generally to continue this trend not recognizing not appreciating that our consuming is leading to a moral and to a spiritual consumption.

It is so terribly easy to get enmeshed in this anti-gospel this anti-scriptural anti-biblical trend in society and the believing guest chamber has to constantly remind himself that a scriptural pattern is moderation in all things.

[17 : 52] The practicing of self-indulgence in any form whatever is a very antithesis of the way of the gospel. Self-discipline and self-denial are the path by which the man of God is to go in life and without due attention to this the physical fittings of the temple of the spirit will very soon begin to cause trouble and fall into disorder.

I keep under my body as what the apostle says and bring it into subjection this is how he acted in reference to his own life. And so the fittings of the believing guest chamber have to be attended to in order to the honor and glory of his name and then to remember that the decor of the believing guest chamber must be pleasing and attractive.

By that I mean the kind of life and the kind of witness that is being projected and that is being thin in the world and the kind of decor which you and I should covet for ourselves is not the kind of decor that would give no offense under any circumstances of life but the kind of Christian conduct that would be well pleasing to God in all things.

of Enoch it is written that he walked with God and if a man consistently and perseveringly and prayerfully endeavors to do this then his overall life and witness will be pleasing and attractive to God and that of course is what matters in the final analysis.

When Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him his response was behold and this real life indeed in whom is no guile and this is what he looks for in the believing guest chamber in all his people and in order to this the believer himself must frequently attend to this matter to his own life and to his own heart so that it would befit the master the divine master who seeks to dwell therein but then too passing on in the third place we are to notice that the believing guest chamber will at length be privileged to receive and entertain a divine master as he did here so he still does among his believing family he has a concern for their overall well being he came into their midst on his occasion and he blessed them with rich and varied blessings for one thing we have to see that when he comes into the midst of his people that he instructs the minds of his people a large part of his ministry at this point was that of instructing his followers on the actual significance of what was happening they were puzzled and bewildered at how the tide was apparently turning against their master this is not how they expected matters would turn out and so he had to show them more clearly the nature of his work and what the ultimate outcome of that work would be on on on the way to

[21 : 17] Emmaus you remember after the resurrection he proceeded to do the very same thing with two of his disciples ought not Christ he said to us for these things and to enter into his glory and beginning at Moses and the prophets he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself and my dear friends we should ever be concerned that we understand more clearly and more perfectly the great truth concerning the suffering the death and resurrection of our Lord and of our master the spirit in his saving operations as we know he enlightens the mind in the knowledge of Christ and this is a continuing process a continuing ministry of the Holy Spirit for he takes all the things that are Christ he shows them to us he makes known to our minds those great truths so that they would affect our hearts and our lives here then he instructs the minds of his people and when he comes into their midst he also nourishes the souls of his people here on his occasion he handed them bread and wine and he said take it this is my body this is a new testament in my blood drink ye all of it by he was indicating to them how his death and remembering his death by them in future ages how it would nourish and sustain the life of their souls and as the catechism says concerning the

Lord's supper the worthy receivers are not after a corporal and carnal manner but by faith made partakers of his body and blood to their spiritual nourishment and to their growth in grace and in John chapter 6 verse 54 our Lord says whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life and I will raise him up at the last day for my flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed it is food it is nourishment for your souls this is a bread which cometh down from heaven that a man may eat thereof and not die my friends when he comes to his guest any time he comes saying eat oh friends drink it drink abundantly oh beloved he comes to nourish the souls of his people but then when he comes he comes also to encourage the hearts of his people as he makes known his will and his pleasure to them the most wonderful and heavenly communion table address ever delivered and an address calculated to bring abounding encouragement to the hearts of his people is found in

John's gospel chapters 14 to 17 here our savior was the holiest of holies he was set in with his immediate followers even the presence of Judas did not disturb the peace and the blessedness of that hour of fellowship and the fact that John could record that address so accurately many years after it was first delivered testifies to the indelible impression which it made upon him and on the others Jesus then is concerned that you should be encouraged believer in your heart he says to you just as he surely said to his immediate followers in Palestine so long ago let not your heart be troubled ye believe in God believe also in me he is concerned that the hearts of his people be comforted in the face of the many problems confronting them comfort you comfort ye my people says your

God and then too as he comes to his guest chamber he strengthens the faith of his people for this is his ultimate aim in coming to them and administering his grace to their hearts they are to live by faith and it is in a measure in which their faith is strong and their witness will be effective and their lives uncontradicted and so his ministry is an exercise in faith strengthening he ministers to his own gift in the believing life so that that gift would shine forth with greater lustre and clearness and brightness in a dark and evil world as the 11th chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews so clearly teaches it is by faith that God's people are to subdue kingdoms work righteousness obtain promises stop the mouth of liars quench the violence of fire escape the edge of the sword out of weakness are made strong wax valiant in fight and turn to flight the armies of the aliens for this reason faith must be strong and it is recognized by themselves when they pray as they must do from time to time

Lord increase our faith grant that our faith may be strong that it may evidence itself in the world in which we are living and so then as we close my friends and seek to apply these words to our own lives and our own situation what there are just two things I want briefly to say first is that the question we have here where is the guest chamber where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples the question or to pose a challenge and the personal challenge which this question poses for you and for me is simply what is the present state of our spiritual guest chamber in view of the special duties and privileges of the coming days what is the present state of our spiritual guest chamber in 1st

[27 : 50] Corinthians chapter 11 the spirit by the apostle demands let a man examine himself and so let him eat of this bread and drink of this cup every one of us on the approach to the sacrament of the Lord's supper ought to examine himself of his knowledge as the catechism says of his knowledge to discern the Lord's body of his faith to feed upon him of his repentance love and new obedience how do I stand now in relation to these matters as I speak to examine myself before God do I discern the Lord's body more clearly today than ever before and the meaningfulness of that death and resurrection is my face more robust and more firmly rooted than ever it was in the past has there been a deepening and a developing of the graces of repentance love and obedience in my life whatever answers we return to these matters the question itself is inescapable where is the guest chamber where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples and only you can scrutinize your own life before God as you ought but the question it ought to pose a challenge it must pose a challenge for every one of us if we think to be properly exercised and then to the other matter that I want to mention is that the question ought to awaken anticipation that the one who poses the question will indeed present himself in the guest chamber that has been exercised in preparing for him where is the guest chamber where I shall eat he says remember my friend for your encouragement that at the first sacramental service he graciously presided he took the oversight of all the proceedings from that occasion he spoke words of instruction and encouragement and enlightenment to his people he led his followers into a fuller understanding of his own mission and of his own love he marvellously opened his heart before them in the wonderful prayer which he offered and which we have recorded in John chapter 17 his high priestly prayer and all this ought to act as a tremendous source of encouragement to ourselves for remember he hasn't changed in any way he is the same now as he was then he is as willing now as he then was to bestow his grace his mercy and his love upon his waking believing people as they seek to have communion with him as they seek to come in obedience to his command to his footstool and do this in remembrance of him may God grant that we might be enabled to look at ourselves more closely than ever before and give him no rest until he would fit us and equip us to give obedience to his command so that we would indeed meet him and in the process be ourselves blessed and glorify him in what we seek to do amen may God add his blessing to our meditation in his world shall we unite in prayer our gracious

God thou dost look upon us and we believe that thou dost pose the question which thou dost pose so long ago in view of the duties and obligations in which thy people engage where is the guest chamber where I shall eat the supper with my disciples do thou grant oh God that the guest chamber of our soul might be a fit habitation to meet with thee and to commune with thee do thou work in our hearts and in our lives by the power of thy spirit enable us truly to engage meaningfully upon our duty to examine ourselves and so to eat of this bread and drink of this cup so that thou wouldest be glorified in every activity in which we would engage hear us oh God in our supplication bless thy word to our hearts part us with thy benediction for Jesus sake

Amen