

Dear Heavenly Father,

### *Praise*

Jesus said, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood” (Luke 22:20). I praise you today as the God of the new covenant, the covenant that renews my heart and regenerates my spirit! I join with the songwriter and sing, “There is a fountain filled with blood, Drawn from Immanuel’s veins, And sinners plunged beneath that flood, Lose all their guilty stains”! Hallelujah!

### *Today in Your Word*

Today you told me about the last Passover meal that Jesus shared with his disciples. The wording suggests that the upper room had been prepared in the Roman style with the food on a triclinium (a U-shaped table). This table was set low to the ground so those eating could recline on their left elbow while eating with their right hand (John 13:23–25). Guests reclined around the table according to social custom, where the position signified either greater or lesser honor.<sup>1</sup> The disciples had prepared the meal themselves, and there was no servant to wash their feet. No one volunteered, and so they took their places at the table with dry and dusty feet. They evidently weren’t happy with the seating order, for a dispute soon began over who was the greatest. I can’t help but wince as I picture this scene in my mind. Jesus was about to eat his final Passover meal with his closest friends and all they could do was argue about who was more important! Jesus told them, “Let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves.” Then he put his words into action by pouring water into a basin and washing his disciples’ feet. How this convicts my heart! Am I looking for ways to serve others, or am I looking for the place of greatest honor? Lord, give me the mind of Christ! Help me to humble myself and take a servant’s role. At the table, Jesus was in the place of the host. John was on his right, with his back to Jesus, while Peter was on the far side in last place. And where was Judas? Where was the man who had treachery and betrayal in his heart? The wording suggests that he was on Jesus’ left *in the place of highest honor!* (cf. John 13:26). Did he take that place for himself? It seems unlikely given Jesus’ rebuke. No, I think Jesus put Judas there himself. Down to the very last moment, Jesus was reaching out to Judas, not wanting him to commit that final, terrible act of sin. I say, ‘Praise God for love that pursues me in my sin! Praise God for grace that persists in spite of my rejection! Praise God for mercy that seeks me when I go astray!’ Jesus is not willing that *any* should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Hallelujah, what a Savior!

### *Reflection*

Jesus told Peter, “Behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, *but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail!*” (Luke 22:31–32). Oh, glorious thought, that Jesus prays for me! How I cherish those words! When I’m about to fall into sin and forsake my dearest friend, Jesus prays for me. When my mind is confused and my heart is filled with fear and doubt, Jesus prays for me. When I face life’s hardest trial and the raging waves threaten to drown my soul, Jesus prays for me. I say, ‘Praise the Lord! I can do all things through him who strengthens me!’

### *Request*

Father, help me to live in word and deed the “new commandment” of your Son. Help me to love others, just as Jesus loved me. May all who see my life know I’m your disciple by the love I have for my fellow Christians.

### *Thanksgiving*

Thank you for Christ, the Passover lamb! He came to shed his blood on the cross in my place and to take away my guilt and shame. “When this poor, lisping, stamm’ring tongue, Lies silent in the grave, Then in a nobler, sweeter song, I’ll sing Thy pow’r to save!” Praise the Lord!

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

*Suggested Hymn: “[There Is a Fountain](#)” – William Cowper.*

*Meditation Verse: Luke 22:19.*

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<sup>1</sup> James C. Martin, John A. Beck, and David G. Hansen, *A Visual Guide to Bible Events* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2009), p. 198.