

## Session 7: The Last Supper, For Now

## SESSION GOALS

*Every session has a point—what each participant should walk away from the discussion knowing, feeling, and doing.*

**Main Idea:** Jesus's death and resurrection offer us hope for new life in him. We can rejoice, anticipating the grand reunion feast waiting for us in his coming kingdom.

**Head Change:** To know that Jesus's resurrection gives us hope for eternal life with him.

**Heart Change:** To feel encouraged by the prospect of an eternal, beautiful future with God.

**Life Change:** To exercise the spiritual discipline of table fellowship as an expression of our hope, creating opportunities to regularly gather with other believers and inviting the lost to come and see the hope we have in Jesus.

Each session in *Table Talks* corresponds to a video segment featuring a recipe. Feel free to watch the video as a group, make the recipe together, and use the icebreaker question below to spark conversation while you eat.

**OPEN**

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**If you were able to invite any living person to have dinner with you, who would it be? What topics would you cover during your meal? And what would you prepare for your time together?**

Fellowship around a table, while sharing good food and conversation, is an effective, artful method of growing relationships. The pace of our society, however, impedes our efforts to cultivate friendships slowly. In today's session, Bianca will look at the Last Supper as a hopeful event pointing to our future feast in heaven and as a model for a spiritual discipline we can implement today.

## REVIEW

Bianca began by imagining what she would cook if she could have us all over for dinner at her place. **Do you have a favorite recipe you use when hosting? What makes it special?**

Jesus and his disciples gathered for their annual Passover dinner, a traditional feast celebrating an important event in their nation's faith. But at their last Passover together, Jesus changed things up. Read Luke 22:14–22.

The bread and wine now represented his body and blood, which would be sacrificed for them and us. He knew that, after dinner, he would be arrested, tried, and falsely condemned to die. So he “eagerly desired” to eat one last meal with his friends. **When you are leaving loved ones for a long time, how do you like to celebrate before you go? What sorts of feelings dominate during your last time together?**

Jesus comforted them with a vision of future joy—the next time they would gather for such a meal would be a celebration of God’s kingdom.

**Why do you think Jesus offered his disciples a hopeful vision of the future? How can hope help us endure difficulty?**

Jesus made the ceremonial dinner a word picture for how he would bring salvation to us. Through cracked bread, bitter herbs, and sweet wine, the disciples tasted and felt tangible illustrations of the price Jesus was about to pay. We are tactile people with five senses to help us experience the world. In Communion, or the Lord's Supper, we have a small piece of bread and some wine or grape juice. But even these small offerings can engage all of your senses **In what ways does the Lord's Supper create an environment that engages all of your senses? How does holding and tasting the communion elements solidify Jesus's sacrifice in your mind?**

Bianca quoted biblical scholar N. T. Wright, who wrote that Jesus “gave them a meal” as a way to explain his death to his disciples. For thousands of years, the church has mimicked Jesus by celebrating the Lord’s Supper. The details may differ by region or tradition, but we often repeat Jesus’s words from the Last Supper when we take this meal. **If you attend church, how does the Lord’s Supper help you focus on Jesus’s sacrifice for you? Which elements of your tradition make the ceremony meaningful to you?**

Read Luke 13:29 and Revelation 19:6–9. Both passages reference a future feast in God’s kingdom. At the Last Supper, Jesus acknowledged his coming suffering, which must have been sobering to hear. But he ended on a note of hope

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Verses 3 and 4 describe the union between God and humanity. Jesus became a human and dwelt among us for a time, and the Spirit lives in us now. But someday, Jesus will return to dwell permanently with us. **When has God’s nearness meant the most to you?**

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**What can we do to remind ourselves and others of God’s present and future proximity with us?**

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The new kingdom also means peace, wholeness, joy—all that we fight to attain as we struggle against sorrow, death, and pain. With God, broken things are made new. **What in your life needs to be made new? How could the hope you have in Christ encourage you as you wait for God’s renewal?**

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In verses 6–7, God himself announces that he has done it! In the new heavens and new earth, he is the trustworthy source of life who has answered every need, renewed every spirit, restored everyone who hoped in him. **How does the vision of Revelation 21 encourage your faith today? What does it change or add to the way you worship God?**

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*How does hope affect our lives now?*

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Read Colossians 1:3–5. Paul, writing to a church, describes why he thanks God for them: their faith in Jesus and love for God’s people. **According to verse 5, what is the church’s faith and love rooted in? What’s the connection between hope, faith, and love?**

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The church in Colossae continued to faithfully love each other because they were motivated by

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what was coming in the future. In other words, their hope changed the way they lived. **What are some specific ways you’ve seen your actions, thoughts, or relationships change because of your hope in God?**

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The Colossian church expressed their faith and loved each other so well that they were known for their hope. **Who are the most hopeful people in your life? What makes them unique?**

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Hope changes everything. When we put our hope in what is sure—Jesus’s resurrection and future return—we are transformed from the inside out. We can be joyful in difficult circumstances; we can rest in a world that prizes busyness; we can serve other people sacrificially. **What could it look like in your life for hope in Christ to ground you, to support you in daily life? How could hope motivate your conversations, your decisions, your prayers?**

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Bianca closed her teaching by encouraging us to exercise our hope through a specific action: table fellowship. Our mealtime gatherings—often referred to as the table—offer microcosmic moments to celebrate God’s work in our lives and point to our future with him. A small group sharing dinner, a few friends at a coffee shop, a family enjoying a picnic . . . the setting doesn’t matter as long as love is central. Tasty food is a bonus. **What could the discipline of table fellowship look like in your life? Whom could you invite to your table?**

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**LAST WORD**

Hope has a name—Jesus. His resurrection gives us courage and excitement and purpose as we walk out our days keeping his promises in mind. Our hope for his return is based on solid intel—he

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**Memorize:** Memorize Revelation 19:7, “Let us be glad, rejoice, and give him glory, because the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has prepared herself.”

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6300 Henneman Way  
McKinney, TX 75070  
[www.rightnow.org](http://www.rightnow.org)

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