

# Our Most Holy and Sacred Night

- On this night, Jesus Christ laid down his life that we may live, and live no more for self, but for others.
- Demonstrating a love greater than all others ‘that he should surrender his soul in behalf of his friends.’ - John 15:13
- While it is a solemn and holy night, it is also a joyous night. For though we memorialize his death, we also celebrate his life and the way he lived it.

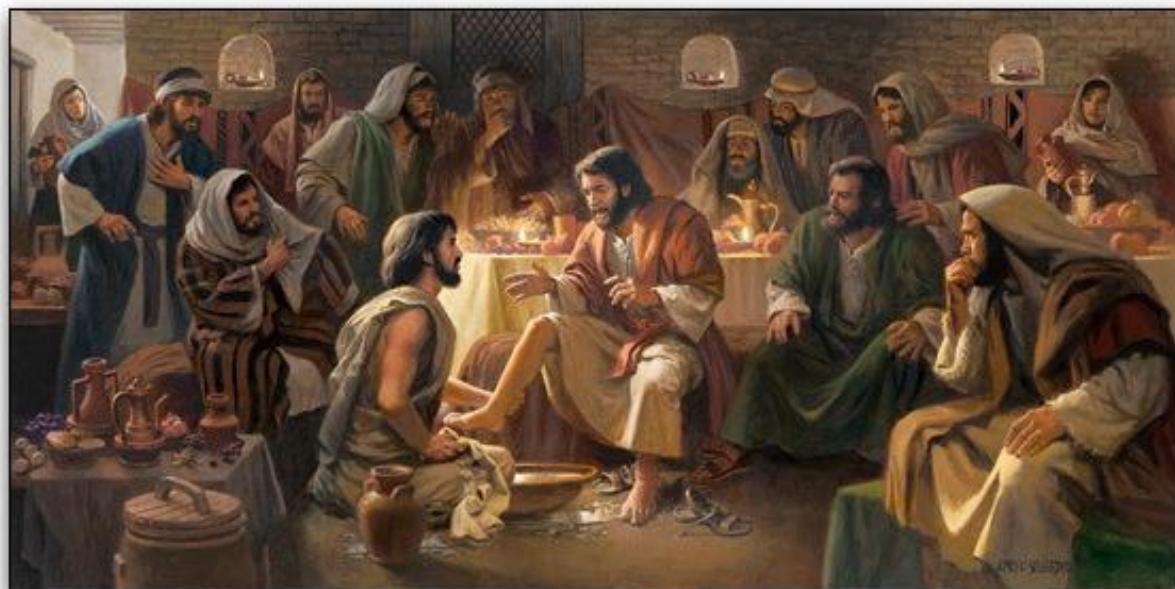
Christianity has a God-given, Christ-exemplified mission

Each year marks the anniversary of the courageous and noble end of the matchless earthly sojourn of the **Son of God/Son of Man**.

- The first Memorial coincided with the Jewish Passover celebration. As part of the Passover, a plate of special foods and herbs is passed around and four cups of wine are passed commemorating the four main stages of the Exodus.



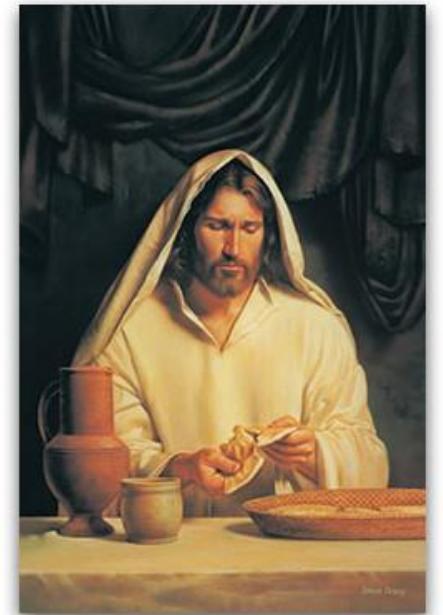
- Jesus began the evening in the customary way. He passed the special foods and herbs and the wine, but during one passing, he added something different: “Also, he took a loaf, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to them, saying: ‘**This means my body which is to be given in your behalf. Keep doing this in remembrance of me.**’ Also, the cup in the same way after they had the evening meal, he saying: “**This cup means the new covenant by virtue of my blood, which is to be poured out in your behalf.**” – Luke 22:19-20
- After each passing of the cup, it is customary for the host to rise and wash his hands. At this point in the meal, Jesus again did something different. John tells us that Jesus: “. . . got up from the evening meal and laid aside his outer garments. And, taking a towel, he girded himself. After that he put water into a basin and started to wash the feet of the disciples and to dry them off with the towel with which he was girded.
- And so he came to Simon Peter. He said to him: “Lord, are you washing my feet?” In answer Jesus said to him: “**What I am doing you do not understand at present, but you will understand after these things.**” Peter said to him: “You will certainly never wash my feet.” Jesus answered him: “**Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.**” – John 13:4-8



- Jesus requested that we keep this supper “in remembrance of him.”
- We should first look back, not only on the manner of his death, but upon his life in the flesh, how he loved us and how he faced every obstacle thrown at him with dignity and humility.
- We should recall that he indeed was once with mankind, and then, by faith, discern that we shall all some time sup with him in the Father's eternal kingdom.
- Jesus proceeded to wash the feet of all twelve, including Judas Iscariot, as an illustration of the meaning of the new commandment he was about to give them.

“When, now, he had washed their feet and had put his outer garments on and laid himself down at the table again, he said to them: “**Do you know what I have done to you? You address me, ‘Teacher,’ and, ‘Lord,’ and you speak rightly, for I am such. Therefore, if I, although Lord and Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash the feet of one another. For I set the pattern for you, that, just as I did to you, you should do also. Most truly I say to you, A slave is not greater than his master, nor is one that is sent forth greater than the one that sent him. If you know these things, happy you are if you do them.**” – John 13:12-17

What is important is the meaning of the symbols, not the symbols themselves



- However, on this night, they had fallen into their usual practice of arguing over who was the greatest.
- Jesus was giving them an object lesson in humility and service to one another.
- We can take this lesson as a model of behavior toward one another – not to complain about who is and who is not greater than the other, but to recognize that we are all brothers with equal standing before God.
- Jesus said: “**I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves.**” – John 13:31-35
- Jesus is “**the way, and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through him.**” (John 14:6)
- We must therefore, imitate the love, the faith and the life of Jesus, so that we, too, can go our ‘way’ to the Father where Jesus himself has prepared places for us.
- Jesus continued that evening with encouragement and counsel. He said:
  1. if we love him, we will observe his commandments
  2. that he would be sending the spirit of truth
  3. that he is the True Vine and we must remain in union with him.
  4. that we must keep on bearing much fruit
  5. that we must love one another
  6. that we can ask the Father anything in his name and it will be given
  7. that he had conquered the world, and many other things.

The apostles saw the way of service in Jesus’ life and were blessed to have served courageously along side him.

We need not mourn as the rest, but to rejoice to be able to share in the life of our great Teacher and older Brother by being of service to one another, uplifting one another, loving one another, embracing one another, and welcoming one another into the Kingdom of our Father and of his Lord.