

THE PLACE OF HIS APPOINTMENT

Luke 22:7-19

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This afternoon we want to speak of:

- 1. THE PLACE OF HIS APPOINTMENT**
- 2. THE REMEMBRANCE OF THE LORD**
- 3. THE SPIRIT THAT IS SUITABLE TO THAT PLACE**
- 4. THE ADVOCACY OF CHRIST TO SUSTAIN US IN THAT PLACE**
- 5. THE PATH OF SEPARATION WHICH BECOMES THOSE THAT ARE IN THAT PLACE**
- 6. PRAYER AS THE SECRET OF POWER TO KEEP US IN THAT PLACE**

That is somewhat the outline we have before us, in considering the chapter.

1.

So our first thought here is **the place of His appointment; v. 7** *"Then came the day of unleavened bread when the Passover must be killed."* The Passover was an old institution; it had been instituted about 1500 years before this. It had not been very faithfully kept. It was supposed to be kept every year but the children of Israel had not been faithful, they had let it lapse year on year. In fact if you will go through the Old Testament you will find very few places where they did keep it. But every Passover that was kept, whether in Egypt or afterwards was just a fingerpost to this Passover here. This is the last one which had any significance for God. They might have neglected many another, but here is one that came at the time when the Passover must be killed. There is a "must" there. You know when God puts a must in His program it is going to be that way. When God writes down a thing and dates it, you know it is going to take place when and where and exactly as He purposed it.

The Lord Jesus realized that the shadow of the cross was already across His path; He knew that. He was not in the least taken by surprise; He had it before Him. So He sends two of His disciples to prepare the place where they might eat the Passover. *"Go and prepare us the Passover"* - "Us" - He is going to eat it with them. *"That we may eat."* (v. 2) *"And they said unto Him, Where wilt Thou that we prepare?"* I think it is lovely that the disciples put the question to Him. It was becoming, it was in season. I wonder if we are half that sincere today? It is exactly the opposite of the common slogan of the day, "the church

of your choice." I have heard that until I am weary of hearing it; and I hear it from those who certainly ought to know better. They profess to know their Bibles; they have certain degrees after their names as having graduated from some course which is supposed to give them some knowledge of the Scripture, and yet talk about the "church of your choice." To me it is the gravest expression.

Does God have anything to say to these matters? Is He indifferent? Has God left some kind of manifesto to the effect that any path that you take will be all right with Me? Do you find anything like that in your Bible? **"Where wilt Thou?"** As I look back on my own life for years I was indifferent on this point; it was where I wanted to go, not, **"Where wilt Thou?"** There was difficulty in the place where I was going, so I said, "I am not going here any longer; I am going there," and so I transferred. I made my choice and went there for several years. Then the time came in my life, not through any choice of my own, when God began dealing with me. It is a serious thing when God begins to deal with you; you had better stop and listen. As one old brother said to another, "Brother, you had better stop and listen, for God will not give in."

If God is dealing with you, beloved, about something in your path and you are refusing submission, you had better surrender, because God is not going to change His mind. I finally came to the point in my life where I said, **"Where wilt Thou?"** When I reached that point of surrender and willingness to know His will, He led me. It is 55 years ago this month (1906) that I found the place of His appointment. I have not spent five minutes regretting that I found it, and am not looking for another place. I am near the end of my pilgrimage here and want the trumpet to give a clear sound. I want to state God has a place in this world in His sovereign goodness and mercy, a clean place where we can meet with our Lord and be assured of His presence and favor. Where wilt Thou?

Did the Lord say, "Peter, you are a man of pretty good judgment, you go and find a suitable place, that will be all right with Me"? No, He did not say anything like that. Oh, nothing like that. He said, (v. 10) **"You go into the city, and there a man shall meet you bearing a pitcher of water, follow Him into the house where He enters in."** Those directions could not be misunderstood. You go into the city and a man will meet you, not you meet a man. It did not matter what road they took into the city; a man will meet you. He will have a pitcher of water, which was important. You follow Him into the house where He enters in.

Typically that man represents the guidance of the Spirit of God. That man was the Spirit of God in type. No doubt the water He was bearing was typically the Word of God. Perhaps the vessel was some poor human instrument. I suppose you were brought to Christ through someone. Did someone labor with you, talk with you, give you the gospel and pray with you? Perhaps it was your father or your mother. But you did not come into the knowledge of salvation and the truth of God just all on your own. You were not born some place away from humanity; you have had people who helped you to find the way - poor earthen vessels.

I look back and thank God for those who helped me in my spiritual life. It is a great privilege to help someone on in his soul. Dear brethren, it is a solemn thing to stumble other Christians. How we need the help of one another! I need you, brethren, I need your help, your cheer, your encouragement, your prayers. We are dependent, we are interdependent. God has made us that way and that is the reason He has said, ***"Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is, but exhort one another."*** Do not hire a professional exhorter, and set him over you and say, "We are praying him to do the exhorting." It is nothing of the kind, but "exhorting one another." You need to exhort me, and if I may be permitted to exhort you, it is a mutual thing.

Yes, there was a vessel there, but the vessel did not count, but it was the water in the vessel. The Holy Spirit was the One whom they would follow, and the way that the Holy Spirit leads us is by the Word; the Holy Spirit of God never leads you contrary to the Word of God. "Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against Thee." It is a divine principle that you and I are led along in our spiritual life by the Word. That is not like the holiness man who said, "We have such marvelous meetings that we do not need the Bible any more. We get our visions and direction straight from the Holy Ghost Himself." That was all I needed to hear. Keep away from that place. We are never wiser than Scripture, and it is the Word of God that the Spirit of God uses to guide us in all these questions.

Were the disciples disappointed? **V. 11 *"And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house"***: I take the "goodman of the house" here to be the same man that met them with the pitcher of water. [Editor: Another interpretation sees the three persons of the Godhead involved: The Lord sends the disciples, the Son of God; the man with the pitcher of water, the Spirit of God; and the Goodman of the house, God the Father. Note further that in Scripture the Spirit of God is

never addressed by the believer as the Lord directed the two disciples to ask the Goodman of the house.] The Spirit of God is the One who takes charge in the meetings of God's people; that is, it is the Lord by the Spirit who guides and leads in these things. "Say to the goodman of the house, the master saith unto thee, Where is the guest chamber, where I shall eat the Passover with My disciples?" Where is it? If you ask the goodman of the house is he going to say, I do not know, one place is as good as another? Is that the attitude? There is no suggestion of any such uncertainty here. "And He shall shew you" and He will "shew you a large upper room furnished, there make ready." That He will do if we are submissive.

Three things characterize that room: it is an upper room, and it is a furnished room, and it is a large room. All three of these points are important. The place of God's appointment is that it shall be a large platform, a large basis, it is a large fellowship. How large is it? It comprehends the Church of God, found here on this earth. For God's Word knows only one fellowship. ***"They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship."*** Put the apostrophe on the end of apostles in that verse. I am quoting **Acts 2:42**. The apostrophe there describes the fellowship as well as the doctrine. It does not show up so plainly in our King James Bible, but it is a fact. It is the apostles' fellowship. The apostles' fellowship will always be in accord with the apostles' doctrine.

This fellowship, this ground of meeting, is as large as the extent of the Church of God on this earth. That was God's intention. God did not intend to split the thing up into 1500 fragments, all with some different appellation. No, He saw but one company and Christ in the Center of that company, and the Holy Spirit taking the things of Christ and revealing them to the whole company. So it was a large room and a fellowship that answers to the heart of God. And a fellowship which answers to the heart of God will be one that acknowledges that the Church of God is one and the extent of it is worldwide. It is a large room. So the ground of fellowship must be large; it must be the ground of the Church of God.

The fellowship in which most of us here find ourselves, is the fellowship that acknowledges the truth of the Church of God on this earth. Sometimes we are asked, "You are a closed fellowship, are you not?" I answer promptly, "No, we are not." I would rather say I hope we are a careful fellowship. There is a vast difference between a careful fellowship and a closed fellowship. There is no such thing as membership of brethren. There is such a thing as local identity.

That is Scriptural. But there is no such thing as what people commonly call church membership. The ground of gathering takes in the whole flock of God. It was a large room; it was an upper room. How important that is, beloved saints of God. Bible Christianity is a heavenly thing. You cannot make it articulate with this poor world around you; it was not meant to; it is not of this world. We cannot fit it into that pattern at all. People try to do it.

I was much rebuked by a warm hearted Christian brother because I did not vote at the last election. I did not because I am not of this world, and I believe that "the powers that be are ordained of God"; that "the Most High ruleth in the kingdoms of men and giveth it to whomsoever He will, and setteth up over it the basest of men." We are not of this world. The Lord Jesus Christ said, "They are not of this world even as I am not of this world." Did He ever lift a finger to correct the wrongs in this world? He was asked to do it. "Master, speak unto my brother that he divide the inheritance with me." I suppose he had a good case: did the Lord straighten it out? No, He gave His disciples a lesson on covetousness. He did not lift a finger to correct that wrong.

The Jews were paying taxes to the Romans in their own land, in their own promised country. They challenged His disciples about it; ***"Does your master pay taxes?"*** They asked Him about it. Did He rebel against it? Did He try to change the law; or throw off the yoke of Caesar? Not for a moment. "He said go and take a fish and open its mouth and take the coin and give for Me and thee." He submitted; He did not try to right the wrong. There is another economy coming by and by when He will straighten it out. It is on the way and going to come to pass, but not now. God is not using Christianity to make the world immune to sin. The world is hopeless; it is condemned to judgment.

What is God doing now? He is taking out of it a people for His Name. Ours is an upper room; it is not down on the street level. If you try to fit Christianity into what is around you will lose its savor. It will be neither one thing nor the other. The world does not appreciate it, and you will lose your testimony and happiness. You have not helped the cause of Christ. Do not think you can do evil and have good come of it. "Let us do evil that good may come." The Word of God speaks strongly against that philosophy.

It was a large room and an upper room and is furnished. Everything was there, so when the Lord arrived He sat down with them. There was nothing left to import to make it attractive. The Lord was there. **V. 14 *"And when the hour***

was come, He sat down and the twelve apostles with Him." "Where two or three are gathered together unto My name there am I in the midst of them."

The physical locality has nothing to do with it. It might be in a barn, a basement, an attic, or under a tree; that is not the point. It is the Lord in the midst of the two or three that makes the place of His appointment.

2

"When the hour was come, He sat down and the twelve apostles with Him." It was on that occasion after the Passover was over that He instituted the remembrance of Himself. He partook of the Passover, but did not partake of the memorial that He instituted afterwards. No, He gave that to them and told them that that bread was in memory of His body that was given for them, and that the cup was the memorial of His blood that was being shed for them. He told them to do that in remembrance of Him. ***"Do this in remembrance of Me" (v. 19).*** That is simple. Are you a Christian? Are you remembering the Lord in His death? If not, why not? Have you received a special dispensation from heaven to excuse you? ***"This do in remembrance of Me."*** There is no substitute for it. Going to China as a missionary will not take the place of this.

I do not know of anything in the Bible about a Christian, a believer, a saved person who is not at the Lord's Table. There are cases of discipline where people have to be set aside for the time being. I am not talking about abnormalities like that, but other things being equal, what we find as the accepted thing in the Word. We do not find two classes of Christians: one breaking bread and the other not breaking bread. He said, "This do in remembrance of Me."

In another place we read, ***"As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye shew the Lord's death till He come."*** That is the next event. Would you like Him to come before you had ever answered to His request? That would be a sad situation, would it not?

3

Now we will go on with the third point we promised to say something about. ***V. 24 "And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest."*** When God gives us a photograph of ourselves, He does not retouch it. There is no ironing out of the wrinkles or anything of that kind; He just tells us what we are like. Here we see a picture; we are gazing in the mirror here. "There was a strife among them which should be accounted

the greatest. Can you imagine a greater shame than after the Lord had just finished telling them He was going to die, shed His blood for them, and now what are they occupied with? Is their heart filled with sorrow because He is going to die for them? No, they fell into this controversy as to which would be accounted the greatest.

We can point the finger at them in disgust, but remember brethren; we are not one bit different. That is the material we are made of. If there has been one thing that has been the source of sorrow and discouragement to the saints of God down through the ages, it has been this thing of ambition in the Church of God; saints having an individual determination to push themselves forward regardless of the other person. "I must have the floor." Oh, the untold sorrow wrought in the Church of God. Paul told them about it in **Acts 20, vs. 30** "**Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverting things to draw away disciples after themselves.**" That is not the voice of the Shepherd, but has happened hundreds of times in the history of the Church of God here on earth, This is just what the apostle Paul said would happen. "There was a strife among them which should be accounted greatest." It is sad to read it, but why do we not learn the lesson? It is in the Word for our profit.

27th vs. "For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth?" If you want an opportunity to serve in the Church of God you will find it. There is lots of room at the bottom. But when it is ambition and you must get to the top you cause much sorrow. Jesus said, "**I am among you as he that serveth**". Are you a servant? When Paul wrote that chapter of commendation in the last chapter of Romans, he said, "I commend to you our sister Phoebe." "**Our sister Phoebe, who is a servant.**" Literally that word is feminine; it is the feminine form of the word translated other places as "deacon." That kind of deaconess is all right. Would you not like to be a deaconess? You ask, How can I be a deaconess? It is not by going to school and graduating as a deaconess; getting a little bonnet to serve the saints and the Church of God. I can think of some sisters across the country whom I could name who are deaconesses. Phoebe a servant of the Church of God was at Cenchrea. What a dear woman she was. What a dear woman she was. Paul was glad to write that kind of letter about her.

v. 31: "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat." Why do you think that the Lord said that? He saw the need of it. He saw that Simon Peter was bursting with self-

confidence, and tells him what Satan has in store for him. "He wants to sift you." The Lord virtually says, "***I am going to let Satan sift you.***" That was what the Lord said to Satan when he came to Him about Job. He told him to go ahead. Satan has desired to have you, he will sift you.

4

Here is where the advocacy of Christ comes in. How wonderful is the priesthood of Christ, to know we have One in the glory who is concerned about our everyday life, and what did the Lord tell Peter here? "I have prayed for thee."

Vs. 32 "***But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.***" Did He pray for him after he fell? Did He pray for him after he denied the Lord? No, He prayed for him before he denied the Lord. Did the Lord pray that Peter would not deny Him? No, He prayed that his faith would not fail. The Lord's prayers are answered. The Lord prayed for Peter that way because He saw that Peter needed that lesson. He virtually said, "I am going to let you go through that lesson because it is the only thing that will teach you." But He had prayed for him already that his faith would not fail. His faith did not fail, but his courage did; his courage failed but not his faith. When He got that look from the One whom he loved better than anyone on earth, it broke him to pieces and he went out and wept bitterly. Poor Peter with tears streaming down his cheeks, his frame shaking with emotion. I denied my Lord. It took one look from the Lord to break him down. He needed that to get rid of some of his self-confidence, but Christ's intercession restored him to communion.

So beloved, there is the priesthood and advocacy of Christ for us. "***If any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.***" Where does the advocacy start? Not with the confession; the Lord knows about it beforehand, and it is the advocacy that brings the sinner to repentance. He does not go to the Lord to get Him to be his advocate. The thing that brings him to confess his sins and get right with God is the advocacy of Christ. This starts the work in his heart and brings him to repentance. Let us not forget that if we sin we have an Advocate with the Father, not with God. We need that advocacy to sustain us in the path of faith.

5

The next point we will consider is our position [and/or path of separation] here in this world. **Vs. 36** "***Then He said unto them, But now he that hath a purse,***

let him take it and likewise his scrip; and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one." Vs. 37 "For I say unto you, that this that is written must be accomplished in Me. And He was reckoned among the transgressors; for the things concerning Me have an end." Vs. 38 "And they said, Lord, behold here are two swords. And He said unto them, It is enough."

In the gospels we find the Lord sending out the disciples and the seventy and He sends them out with certain regulations. They were not to take much equipment with them. They were not to take two coats or their scrip; they were to go out in a simple way, and go from house to house. That was the way He sent them. It was quite proper for the mission on which He sent them. But now things are altogether different. If you ever meet up with any of the Cooneyites or "go preachers", "two by twos", here is where they are completely astray. They act on the commission that the Lord gave the seventy. They try to imitate it. And so they go out two by two, house to house and say, "Peace unto this house" and if they are not invited in, shake the dust off their feet. They take no money with them, and so you are supposed to take them in and take care of them. What they fail to see is that the whole picture changed here.

Vs. 36 "Then He said unto them, But now he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip, and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one." One of them said, "Lord, here are two swords." How little of the spirit of the Master they had taken in. Why did they have one sword and yet were able to produce two? After they had followed Him for three years and a half they could find two swords right in their midst. The Lord said, "It is enough." In other words, He would enlighten them no more at that time. Later they would understand.

What was the matter with them? They had not realized what their calling was, but they would in a few days after this. They would be anointed with the Spirit of God on the day of Pentecost, and what a transformed company they would be; but until that time they never understood what the Lord was telling them. Beloved, it is only by the Spirit of God and the Word of God that you and I ever understand what it is to be a Christian in this world and walk as a Christian. No, it is not literal swords that we need: it is just the opposite. We need to take the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. It is sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing asunder of soul and spirit and joints and marrow and is the discerning of the thoughts and intents of the heart. That is what we need, the

sword of the Word of God. We are not to go forth and think we can force Christianity on the world; it has been tried.

Armies have gone out in the Name of the Lord. You boys and girls have read about the crusades when studying your history. What a wild idea it was, and yet they thought they were doing the will of God, going out to force Christianity on the world at the point of the sword. No, that is not it, but we go out in the midst of a hostile world armed with nothing but the Word of God, and the heavenly armor He tells us about in Ephesians.

6

There is one more point in the **39th verse** - ***"And He came out and went as He was wont, to the Mount of Olives and His disciples also followed Him."*** Vs. 40 ***"And when He was come to the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation."*** Pray! Pray! How Satan loves to rob us of time to pray. A prayerless life is a barren life. I wonder if anyone in this room this afternoon would prove innocent of neglect of prayer? Why is it so hard to find time to pray? It is because "Satan trembles when he sees the feeblest saint upon his knees." That is the last thing he wants to see you or me do, get down on our knees and pray. It is the source of our strength in conflict with the powers of darkness. Yet when we go back and witness the life of our blessed Lord, we see He was constantly a Man of prayer. We read over and over again about Him praying; yes, spending all night in prayer. (This is a side remark) you never find Him praying with other people. You never find Him saying, "Let us pray." No, He withdraws, even if it is only ***"a stone's throw."*** That is His uniqueness, His Deity. But He says here in our passage, ***"Pray that ye enter not into temptation."***

Young folks, do not get the idea that you are strong Christians and that you can voluntarily go into temptations and escape harm. A doctrine is being preached today, in which they teach that we should go and associate with the ungodly in order to tell them of Christ. That is a dangerous doctrine. The Word of God says, ***"Come out from among them and be ye separate."*** No, ***"being let go they went to their own company."*** We are ***"to make straight paths for our feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way."*** God wants me to walk through this scene with an eye to His glory, separated from evil of every kind and on every hand. We will not gain the ungodly by going on with them in their play and ways in the world. ***"Pray that ye enter not into temptation."*** We find

the Lord Himself in the agony of Gethsemane, a little further down. It is not our purpose to speak of that now. It is one of the most sacred portions in the Word of God. There He was in that dreadful agony.

Vs. 45 "And when He rose from prayer and was come to His disciples He found them sleeping for sorrow." Vs. 46 "And He said unto them, Why sleep ye? Rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."

Let us apply that verse in closing: **"Why sleep ye?"** Why are you asleep spiritually? Rise and pray, **"Awake thou that sleepest and arise from among the dead and Christ shall shine upon thee."** **"Why sleep ye? Rise and pray."** Oh, how dependent we are. When you and I get up in the morning, we cannot be sure we will get through each particular day without seeking His help in prayer. Why not pray before temptation comes? Pray that ye enter not into temptation. Thus we will be kept from bringing dishonor on the Lord's Name.

These are simple truths, beloved saints of God. I know they are elementary, but they are important in the day in which we live. The disposition around us is to reduce everything to a dead level, and we are afraid of being considered odd or peculiar. We are afraid of being marked out as being a little over-enthusiastic and try to escape the reproach of Christ.

"They that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Let us not be afraid of it. **"If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you" (John 15:20).** That is a promise. Do not be afraid of the curl of the lip. Do not be afraid of the remark behind the hand, which you know is about yourself. Count it all joy when you suffer for Him. He will see you through it. What a privilege in a day like this to bear the Name of Christ, the rejected One!