

Eating with Jesus: Mark 2:15-17

Sunday, March 3, 2024
Covenant Church
Pastor Zack Phillips

Mark 2:15-17

¹⁵ And as he sat at dinner in Levi's house, many tax collectors and sinners were also sitting with Jesus and his disciples—for there were many who followed him. ¹⁶ When the scribes of the Pharisees saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, they said to his disciples, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" ¹⁷ When Jesus heard this, he said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have come to call not the righteous but sinners."

I. The Importance of Eating to Our Faith

Broadly...

Our first and fundamental sin is securing our own food (Gen 3).

One way to articulate our central hope is being welcomed at the King's feast table.

Matt 8:10-12: In response to the centurion's faith, Jesus proclaims: "[M]any will come from east and west and will eat with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the heirs of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (see a similar thing Jesus says after the "narrow door" saying and Parable of the House Owner in Luke 13:28-29).

Matt 26:29: When he institutes the Lord's Supper at his Last Supper, Jesus tells them that he will "never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when [he] drink[s] it new with you in [his] Father's kingdom" (cf. Mark 14:25 and Luke 22:18).

Luke 14:15-24: In the Parable of the Great Banquet, after the respected guests decline his banquet invitation, the master invites those marginalized by society to fill his house and taste his dinner (see the similar Parable of the Wedding Feast in Matt 22:1-14).

Rev 19:9: And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb."

Luke 22:28-30: "You are those who have stood by me in my trials; and I confer on you, just as my Father has conferred on me, a kingdom, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke 22:28-30).

In the Beatitudes in Luke, Jesus says "Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled" (Luke 6:21).

At the end of the Lord's message to the church in Ephesus in Rev 2, we learn that "To everyone who conquers, I will give permission to eat from the tree of life that is in the paradise of God" (Rev 2:7). At the end of the Lord's message to the church in Laodicea in Rev 3, he says, "Listen! I am standing at the door,

knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me” (Rev 3:20).

Isa 25:6-10 ⁶ On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines,
of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear.

⁷ And he will destroy on this mountain
the shroud that is cast over all peoples,
the sheet that is spread over all nations;
⁸ he will swallow up death forever.

Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces,
and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth,
for the LORD has spoken.

⁹ It will be said on that day,
Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us.
This is the LORD for whom we have waited;
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

¹⁰ For the hand of the LORD will rest on this mountain.

Amos 9:13-15 ¹³ The time is surely coming, says the LORD,
when the one who plows shall overtake the one who reaps,
and the treader of grapes the one who sows the seed;
the mountains shall drip sweet wine,
and all the hills shall flow with it.

¹⁴ I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel,
and they shall rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them;
they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine,
and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit.

¹⁵ I will plant them upon their land,
and they shall never again be plucked up
out of the land that I have given them,
says the LORD your God.

Jer 31:12-14 ¹² They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion,
and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD,
over the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and over the young of the flock and the herd;
their life shall become like a watered garden,
and they shall never languish again.

¹³ Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance,
and the young men and the old shall be merry.

I will turn their mourning into joy,
I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.

**¹⁴ I will give the priests their fill of fatness,
and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty,
says the LORD.**

Our central ritual act is coming to the Lord's table (cf. Matt 26:26-29//Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:14-23; 1 Cor 11:23-26)

Perhaps the thing that scandalized people the most about Jesus was his eating practices (see Matt 11:19//Luke 7:34 and Luke 15:1-2).

Perhaps the most divisive issue in the early church was eating together (Acts 11:2; Galatians; Rom 14; 1 Cor 8-10 and 11).

One of the practices of the early church was "breaking bread" together (Acts 2:42).

One of the most grievous sins, it seems, is lack of hospitality (Luke 10:1-12; cf. vv. 7-9; Matt 10:5-15; 1 Cor 11, esp. v. 29).

More Specifically...

All four gospels tell the story of Jesus Feeding the 5,000 (Mark 6:30-44//Matt 14:13-21//Luke 9:10-17//John 6:1-14) and Matthew and Mark also tell the story of Jesus Feeding the 4,000 (Mark 8:1-10//Matt 15:32-39).

Robert Karris: "In Luke's Gospel Jesus is either going to a meal, at a meal, or coming from a meal."

It was eating that caused the two disciples to recognize Jesus on the Emmaus Road.

One of the few things that we learn about the Risen Jesus after his resurrection and before his ascension is that he eats with the disciples (Luke 24:41-42).

Eating was a major part of Torah and one of three things for which first-century Jews were known.

II. Questions

Why is eating so important to our faith?

Why is the Lord's Table so important?

What can our church learn about eating from Jesus?