

The Last Supper

This time last year, life was pretty normal. There was some awareness that a health crisis was looming, but it just seemed so unlikely to have any great effect on my own day-to-day life. Then, about one week later, everything changed seemingly on a dime. Looking back, what would I have done differently if I had known? If I had known it was the last time I would see kids filling our church Sabbath Schools... The last time I would eat at a restaurant without giving it a thought... The last time I would see my mom for a year, 3 months, and counting... What would I have done differently? I think I would truly have wanted to find a way to make each moment count, each choice have a purpose.

Jesus, at the last supper, knew everything was about to change. How many meals had he eaten with this group? How many festivals and feasts together? For them, this was just one more. Jesus, though, knew. So... we know that each part had special meaning.

He washed their feet and told them to serve each other first. He gave them his own body and blood, saying this is what love looks like. He challenged them on their own motives, and he went out and prayed.

Another challenge has been realizing how big a part church plays in our rituals of remembering. Foot washing, communion, singing, praying - all of these we do in church together...until we can't.

Jesus showed us the practice of serving each other, but he wasn't in church. Jesus gave his body and blood to eat and drink, but he wasn't in the temple. And, these things still matter.

Do I take this as seriously as Jesus did? Jesus commands me to serve, do I really think this matters? When the church can't do communion for me, do I take the time to honor Jesus' last words to his followers?

This year we have been challenged to figure out - what part of my spiritual life is my own, and what parts have I handed off to my church? If this meal mattered, and I know that it did, it matters that I don't just leave foot washing and communion to others to do for me. I need to take them seriously for myself.

What does this look like? It looks like serving when I'm frustrated with how the world is going, when I disagree with someone, when things are hard. Jesus served when facing death, I can serve too. It means taking time to spend time with Jesus now, because I don't know what tomorrow may bring.

And when it comes to the rituals of remembrance, I can do these too. I can include my family, I can do them myself. Jesus showed us how and we are asked to follow. We can show our kids what it looks like to lead in our own homes. We can use this time to show our families that following Jesus matters all the time, no matter what is happening in the world. And we know how it all ends - we can follow Jesus to the end with complete trust and faith that He is coming again.