

“PREPARING A PLACE”

Lesson 1 - John 14:1-3

Separation brings sadness. Some of us know bese we are separated from loved ones. Tht’s why death of a loved one hits us so hard. Death brings sadness. It’s even hard being away from someone we love when they are close to dying.

Jesus was predicting that He would soon die. What did He say to His disciples the night before His death? That brings us to the UR.

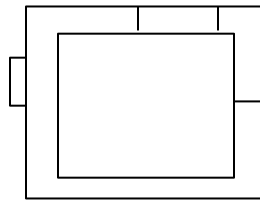
The Lord’s Last Dialogue with His disciples actually occurs in two different locations. After meeting in the Upper Room (John 13-14), Jesus leaves the room and walks outside the city across the valley to the garden of Gethsemane (John 15-17) where He prays His high priestly prayer (John 17).

The Upper Room chosen by Jesus was a large guest room, furnished and ready (Mt. 26:17-19; Mk. 14:12-16; Lk. 22:7-13).

1. Physical setting.¹

Lk. 22:7-13 provides the setting. Jesus instructed disciples to ask for the “guest room” that was located opposite the entrance to the courtyard on ground level. It was used to receive visitors. But the Lord knew the disciples would rcve a “room upstairs” (αναγαιον) instead. This was the most honored room in the house and was given to favored or special guests.

Diagram of Courtyard



*Some had more courtyards.
*Most were 2-story with an outside stairway.

A. Size of the Upper Room (cf. Acts 1:12-15)

^{NAU} **Acts 1:12** Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. ¹³ When they had entered *the city*, they went up to the upper room where they were staying; that is, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James *the son* of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas *the son* of James. ¹⁴ These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with *the women*, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers. ¹⁵ At this time Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren (a gathering of about one hundred and twenty persons was there together), and said,

¹ Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Eerdmans, pages 493-494 cites Jewish documents, especially the Talmud.

B. Arrangement of the Upper Room (cf. Jn. 13:21-27)

^{NAU} **John 13:21** When Jesus had said this, He became troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, that one of you will betray Me." ²² The disciples *began* looking at one another, at a loss *to know* of which one He was speaking. ²³ There was reclining on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. ²⁴ So Simon Peter gestured to him, and said to him, "Tell *us* who it is of whom He is speaking." ²⁵ He, leaning back thus on Jesus' bosom, said to Him, "Lord, who is it?" ²⁶ Jesus then answered, "That is the one for whom I shall dip the morsel and give it to him." So when He had dipped the morsel, He took and gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. ²⁷ After the morsel, Satan then entered into him. Therefore Jesus said to him, "What you do, do quickly."

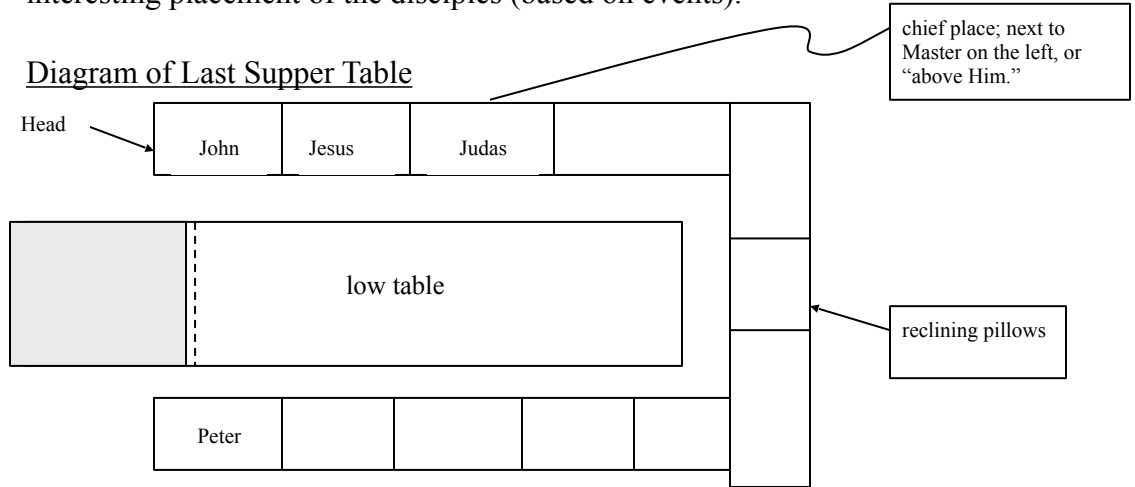
Remove traditional ideas of the arrangement of the Last Supper:

1. Da Vinci -- slide 1 (fresco - Milan)
Da Vinci -- slide 2 (clearer)
2. Ricci – slide 3 (from National Gallery of Art)
3. trad rm of last supper – slide 4 (2 photos)
4. Jesus of Naz. movie – slide 5



Probable Arrangement (cf. Edersheim):

2/3 of the low Eastern table is covered with cloth while the dishes stand on the part left bare. The custom was to recline on the left side on a pillow. Edersheim suggests an interesting placement of the disciples (based on events).



2. Chronological setting.²
(See supplement charts. Go through them, especially Thursday to build factors that “troubled” their hearts.)
3. Emotional setting.

² Notice that the chronological is take from Dr. Harold Hoehner’s work on the chronological aspects of the life of Jesus Christ.

The close bond was about to be broken. They were perplexed, confused about some of what Jesus was saying. Jesus predicted His own death and they left everything to follow Him. Peter's words in Jn.13:37 (rd) make some sense. But Jesus predicts Peter's denial. This leaves even more uncertainty.

That's when J said, "Let not your heart be troubled." (Jn.14:1)

The Lord Jesus gives key steps to take when we are worried or grieving.

John 14:1

"Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me."

WS: "troubled" – hearts like water agitated by the winds. Perplexed, mystified, confused, worried.

A. The first command Jesus gives to His disciples: "stop worrying"
(good idea. How???)

B. The second command Jesus gives to His disciples: "keep on trusting JC."

FIRST KEY STEP (to cure worry/anxiety): TRUST JESUS CHRIST

John 14:2

"In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you."

Eschatological Debate: How the Jewish customs relate to the coming of JC

The best booklet on subject is by Zola Levitt titled *A Christian Love Story*. There *are* variations historically and cross-culturally, but this will emphasize the aspects most often cited by Bible scholars and others who have documented the various aspects of the Old and New Testament Jewish wedding.

Four Phases of Marriage (in Bible, condensed into one day by modern Jews)
 matchmaking (or, less often, falling love)
 betrothal
 return of groom & time alone together
 week of celebrating

Background on a Jewish wedding:

Normally, during the binding betrothal period, the bridegroom would build an additional room for his bride at his father's house. It was not uncommon to find a number of family units living in the same courtyard complex.

When the room was finished and the time had come, the bridegroom would wear a diadem and be accompanied by his friends with tambourines and a band and make his way to the bride's house. Escorted by her companions and richly dressed with jewels, the bride was conducted to the newly prepared home of her bridegroom.

- A. Jesus assures us that there will be room enough for us in the Father's house.
 "In my Father's house are many dwelling places....."
1. The "Father's house" refers to the immediate, glorious presence of the Father where His love and protection are directly experienced.
 2. The "dwelling places" ("mansions?") is the word for "abode" (v.23 – but there it is sprtl).
- B. Jesus assures us that He will provide a place for us. Is it a place? a Person?

What do we know about our destiny for eternity? What is it going to be like? (discuss)

Abraham: looked for a city..... (Hb. 11:8-10 rd)

NAU **Hebrews 11:10** for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

That city is the New Jerusalem:

NAU **Revelation 3:12** He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name.

NAU **Revelation 21:2** And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.

Characteristics of the New Jerusalem (Rev. 22:1-5):

- River flows
- Fruit trees line River Boulevard
- No curse
- God and the Lamb rule
- Saints enjoy the Lord
- No darkness exists
- Saints will reign forever

SECOND KEY STEP (to cure worry/anxiety): **ANTICIPATE THE FATHER'S PRESENCE**

(The joy of His words is that Jesus began with an analogy that requires the Bridegroom to come back for His Bride. So Jesus says, (rd. v3). These words provide the 3rd Key Step to cure anxiety.)

John 14:3

"If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.

- A. Jesus comforts us with the prospect of His return.
 "If" does not introduce doubt that He will go, but to emphasize completing His work and departure first. It almost means "When" I go.

J does not describe a place; he emphasizes the relationship. More imp't than to be in heaven is to be with the Lord (cf. Phil. 1:23 rd).

NAU **Philippians 1:23** But I am hard-pressed from both *directions*, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for *that* is very much better;

What is the time of His return? Did He return to His disciples like He promised?

INTERPRETATION	EVALUATION
Resurrection appearances	J did not prepare a place btn death & res.
The ascension (coming of the HS)	J did not take disciples with Him
Death of the believer	Blvr goes to be wi Lord; Lord doesn't come for blvr.
The rapture	1 Thess. 4; 1 Cor. 15

What is the time of the Rapture?

Different views in relation to 70th week of Daniel: post; mid; pre-wrath; pre.

B. We will be with Jesus forever.

THIRD KEY STEP (to cure worry/anxiety): **LOOK FOR THE RAPTURE**

The prospect of returning with Jesus to the Father's loving presence comforts our hearts.

"Think of stepping on the shore and finding it heaven,
of touching a hand and finding it God's,
of breathing new air and finding it celestial,
of waking up in glory and finding it home."
- Don Wytzen

Next Session: "The Way to the Father" John 14:4-11