



The last supper

Three to four hours, and a meal that would forever change the world. No war or time of peace, no government or nation, no army or ruler has had or will ever have an impact on the course of history in a way this one evening did.

They all sat round the table. Lively conversation... and the main course served. Jesus hadn't said much throughout the evening. He seemed serious, almost sad. Where were there tears in his eyes?

A sadness in his smile?

And then in a brief moment of silence while everyone's mouths were full, he spoke: "I tell you the truth" – and he looked at them all – "one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me." The truth, the bitter truth in the middle of a feast.

You could have heard a pin drop. Suddenly everything came to a sudden halt, and one by one his disciples asked, "It isn't I, is it?" (*pause*)

But it could be all of them.

It could be me.

"It is one of you – one who dips bread into the bowl with me.

They all had been dipping their bread into the bowl...

They all stopped dipping and eating, as he continued.

"The son of man will just go as it is written..."

He'd just got to Jerusalem. How could he talk about leaving it? Talk about going? Where to?

People still needed him. People wanted to hear his teaching. People longed for his love and support.

How can he talk about betrayal?

But hadn't he warned them? Prepared them?

Now they were all angry. Confused. Upset. They didn't know what to think. And they'd lost their appetite.

Silence. Denial. Nobody wanted to think such thoughts.

But then he broke the silence again.

He took some of the bread that was prepared for that day, and said: "Take it; eat it; this is my body."

His body? What did he mean, his body?

They had no idea what he was talking about.

When the food was gone and it was time for another glass of wine to be served, Jesus took the cup of wine, and they drank from it.

“This is my blood of the new covenant which is being shed for many.”

Drinking blood sounds strange.

But that wasn't what they were thinking at that moment. ...his blood being shed for many...

They weren't hearing things. That was the way he phrased it.

Not something in the past or something in the future, but something in the present. As if he knew something had already started. Like this traitor who he had spoken of was already up to no good plans. As if his death was already on the way... As if he was already dying.

And shed for many?

What did he mean?

How could they ever understand?

Jesus thanked his host, when he left the house.

On the table in the upstairs room were bread and wine – body and blood – a reminder of Jesus' last meal with his friends, forever changing the world.

It's become communion for the church.

And we have been celebrating it ever since, remembering him, getting closer in line with him, becoming more and more who he was, who he is, who he's meant us to be.