



SHARE MEALS

SHARE STORIES

MAUNDY THURSDAY
13 APRIL 2017



WHAT IS MAUNDY THURSDAY ALL ABOUT?

The Bible tells us that Jesus shared a meal with his close friends on the night he was betrayed [1 Corinthians 11:23].

So if Jesus was crucified on Friday, then this meal, which we now refer to as the Last Supper, probably took place on the Thursday. And during this meal Jesus told his disciples that they were to “do this in remembrance of me”.

[Luke 22:19]

And it was during this meal that Jesus also gave his disciples the new commandment to love one another [John 13:34-35]. For many years the language of the church was

Latin and the phrase new commandment in Latin is *mandatum novum*. So it is thought that the word Maundy comes from the Latin word *mandatum*.

So Maundy Thursday is the day when Jesus, during a meal with his friends, gave them the new commandment to love

one another as he had loved them. And it is very appropriate for followers of Jesus today to use Maundy Thursday as an opportunity to share meals with their friends, and to use that as an opportunity to remember Jesus.

HOW COULD WE DO IT?

It is sometimes helpful to have both a framework and some hooks to hang things on.

So I suggest using the simple framework of

BEFORE

DURING

AFTER

and I will suggest some set prayers that you could use as hooks to hang other things on.

BEFORE

It is a good and time honoured practice to “say grace” before meals. All that means is that we are saying “thank you” to God for the food that he has provided for us.

A simple Jewish prayer before meals which you could use is:

**Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe,
who brings forth bread from the earth.**

**Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe,
who creates the fruit of the vine.**

This prayer was accompanied by the host of the meal taking a loaf of bread, breaking it and sharing it out between the guests. You could do the same thing: break a bread roll, pass it round so that everyone can break off a piece, and encourage everyone, as they break the bread to thank God for the things that he has provided for them.

It doesn't have to be a long formal prayer -
you could all use the same phrase.

“I thank God that he has provided me with ...”

Then serve your main course

DURING

Between courses you could take the opportunity to remind people of the bread that was shared at the beginning of the meal. When the apostle Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth he said “because there is one loaf we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake in one loaf.

[1 Corinthians 10:17].

And remembering the new commandment that Jesus gave his followers, this would be a good time to thank God for the people he has put around you in your life.

If you wanted to keep it quite simple you could again invite people to use a similar phrase to the one used earlier and thank God for the significant people in their lives:

“I thank God that he has put _____ in my life”.

If it's a small group of very close friends, you may want to do something a little deeper and invite everyone to say what it is about one another that they particularly want to thank God for.

Then serve your dessert

AFTER

The Bible tells us that it was after supper that Jesus took the cup of wine and passed it around for his disciples to drink from. As he did so he said “This cup is the new covenant in my blood which is poured out for you.

[Luke 22:20]

So after dessert, you could have one wine glass filled either with wine or grape juice, and pass it round [with a napkin to wipe the glass as well] for everyone to drink from. And as people pass the wine glass around ... the person passing the glass could say “This glass of wine reminds us of the new covenant that Jesus made” or “this reminds us of the blood of Jesus poured out for us”.

And it would be good to encourage everyone, before they then pass the wine glass on to the next person, so thank God for Jesus and what he means to them.

One way to do this would be to encourage people to think of one of the names or titles that Jesus used about himself, or that other people used about him in the New Testament e.g. the good shepherd, the bread of life, the firstborn from the dead or any of the many others, and to say:

“Thank you Jesus that you are _____”

AFTER CONTD...

You could wrap things up by singing a worship song together, or listening to or singing along to a worship song about the cross, as a way of pointing people forward to the next day, Good Friday. [A couple of my favourite worship songs would be the old hymn, “When I survey the wondrous cross”, or the great song by Vicky Beeching, “The Wonder of the Cross” [O precious sight]

CONCLUSION

All the above has deliberately been shared in the spirit of “you could”. We want you to enjoy having a meal with friends, and in the context of that meal hopefully grow to love one another more, and be more grateful to Jesus for all that he has done. If those things are the outcome, then that is more important than how you organise things.

SHARE YOUR PICS!



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