Fall Week 8 · November 7–8, 2026

The Last Supper: A Table of Traitors

Matthew 26:17–35 · Pastor Larry Osborne · Message #75

The big idea: Jesus is the hero of this story, and we're the traitors at the table. All he asks is that we give what we've received.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Plain text	Grey boxes and Leader Extras
= your group's guide. Same questions your group has in their hands.	= for you only. Tips, extra questions and background your group doesn't see.

THIS WEEK IN 30 SECONDS

The passage

Jesus' last Passover with the Twelve. At the table he says one of them will betray him. Then he takes the bread and the cup and says they're about his own body and blood, poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Later that night he tells them they'll all fall away. Peter swears he won't, and the rest say the same. Jesus has already told them where he'll meet them afterward.

Watch for

- **Casting yourself as the hero.** We read Bible stories as if we're Moses, David or Jesus. Here, we're with the traitors.
- **Share It 1 landing close to home.** Someone may be thinking of something that really happened. Nobody owes the group details.
- **"So I have to trust them again?"** Forgiving isn't forgetting, trusting again or removing all the consequences.

A win this week

Everyone leaves knowing Jesus **loved them first**, and with **one person** they'll go first with this week.

LISTEN: THIS WEEK'S LEADER PODCAST

Listen before group. About 15 minutes on the questions, the tricky moments and what to say when someone asks the hard one. Good for the drive over.

Scan the code or open the episode: share.transistor.fm/s/ff27f5ee. Pass it on to your co-leader or host.

LEADER NOTES & LINKS

- **Social & Impact:** Holiday calendars fill fast. Pick a date for a social, or fill a table this Thanksgiving (first drop-off November 18). **Social ideas** · **Thanksgiving Projects**
- **Leader podcast:** a walkthrough of the questions, the tricky moments and what to say. **northcoastleaders.transistor.fm**
- **Monthly leader email:** behind-the-scenes news, stories and a recipe or two. **Subscribe**
- **Tell us:** a question, a win, or something great about someone in your group? **Send it here**
- **Post attendance: northcoastchurch.com/attendance**
- **Baptisms in November:** If anyone in your group has been thinking about it, this is the month to point them to. Dates by campus: **northcoastchurch.com/baptisms**.

SERMON NOTES: OUTLINE

The Last Supper: A Table of Traitors · A Last Supper Called Passover

The Truth About Love, Mercy, and Forgiveness:

1. Jesus is the **HERO** in the story. We're the **TRAITORS** in the story.

2. All Jesus asks is that we **GIVE** what we've **RECEIVED**.
3. Love is not an **EXTRA CREDIT OPTION**.
4. Love is a **VERB**.
5. Grace, mercy, and love are **GIFTS** that I **GIVE**, not **REWARDS** to be earned.
6. Love that won't **FORGIVE** isn't **LOVE**.

Passages: Exodus 12:1–28 · 2 Corinthians 5:21 · Matthew 26:17–35 · John 13:1–17 · Matthew 20:26–27 · Zechariah 13:7 · Colossians 3:13 · Romans 5:8–10 · 1 Corinthians 13:1–3 · James 4:17 · 1 Corinthians 13:4–7 · Matthew 5:46 · 2 Thessalonians 3:10 · 1 Corinthians 5 · Hebrews 12:6 · Romans 12:17–21

THE GROUP GUIDE *Exactly what your group has, with your leader notes*

These questions are designed to help groups discuss the weekend teaching while building relationships with each other and applying God's Word to our lives.

WARM UP

1. The Last Supper was a meal the disciples would never forget. Picture the most memorable meal you've ever been part of. Where were you, who was around the table, and what made it unforgettable?

> LEADER NOTE
> **Three Warm Ups this week:** Pick the one or two that fit your group.
> **Tip:** Listen for who was at the table and what happened. Those usually matter more than the food.
> **If the room is quiet:** Go first with yours. A dinner disaster counts.

2. Larry reminded us that Jesus is the hero of the story we read this weekend. What's a favorite "hero" story of yours, from a book, a movie, or real life, and what makes you love it?

> LEADER NOTE
> **Tip:** Listen for what people love about their heroes. A lot of the great hero stories have someone taking a hit for people who don't deserve it. Hold on to that for Know It 1.

3. This weekend we read one of the most famous scenes in Scripture. What stood out to you from this weekend's message? Was there anything you heard or noticed for the first time?

> LEADER NOTE
> **Tip:** Most people have known this scene since they were kids, which makes it easy to skim. If someone noticed a detail for the first time, stay there for a minute.
> **If the famous painting comes up:** Verse 20 says they were reclining. Picture a low table and cushions, not a row of chairs (see Go Deeper).
> **Optional extra:** Try this week's Kinship Question (see Leader Extras).

KNOW IT

Re-read Matthew 26:17–35.

> LEADER NOTE
> **Reading:** Nineteen verses, three scenes: the preparation and the announcement (vv17–25), the bread and the cup (vv26–30) and the prediction (vv31–35). Give each scene a different reader. Ask everyone to notice what each person calls Jesus in verses 22 and 25. It sets up question 2.

1. Larry called this "a table of traitors." Judas had already made his deal, Peter would deny Jesus three times, and Jesus told all of them they would fall away that very night. When you read a story like this, do you tend to see yourself as Jesus, as Judas, or as one of the eleven? How does picturing yourself at this table change the way you read it?

> LEADER NOTE
> **Tip:** Larry's point is that we often read Bible stories as morality stories and cast ourselves as Moses, David or Jesus. In this one, we're at the table with the people who are about to run.
> **Aha:** Peter gets the headline, but verse 35 ends, "And all the other disciples said the same." By verse 56 they have all deserted him.
> **Aha:** Before any of them fail, Jesus tells them where he'll meet them: "after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee" (v32). The way back was already in place.
> **Careful:** Some people are already hard on themselves. If someone goes straight to shame, take them to verse 32.

2. In verse 22 the disciples each ask, "Surely you don't mean me, Lord?" In verse 25 Judas asks, "Surely you don't mean me, Rabbi?" What's the difference between seeing Jesus as a respected teacher and seeing Him as Lord? Where might that difference show up in our everyday lives?

> LEADER NOTE
> **Tip:** You can respect a teacher, learn from him and still decide for yourself what you'll do. A Lord gets to tell you what to do. The everyday version: we agree with what Jesus said about money, forgiveness or our enemies, and then do what we'd already planned.
> **Aha:** Judas uses the word again a few verses later, when he kisses Jesus in the garden: "Greetings, Rabbi!" (v49).
> **Read:** Luke 6:46. "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?"
> **Careful:** Don't turn "Rabbi" into a bad word. Jesus calls himself "the Teacher" in verse 18, and Peter calls him Rabbi elsewhere (Mark 9:5; 11:21). The contrast is in this scene.

3. Jesus loved us before we could earn it. Read Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:10, and Ephesians 2:4-5 together. What do you think is the difference between love that takes the first step before it's deserved and love that only responds to what it's been given?

> LEADER NOTE
> **Tip:** All three verses put things in the same order. God moves while we're still sinners (Romans 5:8), before we loved him (1 John 4:10) and while we were dead (Ephesians 2:4–5). Let people notice that before you explain it.
> **If people get stuck:** Love that only responds sounds like "You were nice to me, so I'll be nice to you." Ask how much of their week runs on that.
> **Read:** Matthew 5:46. If you only love those who love you, "what reward will you get?"

SHARE IT

1. Most of us think of ourselves as forgiving people, but we usually have one or two exceptions. What are 2-3 things you would struggle to forgive, things you might even consider unforgivable? (This doesn't have to be something that has happened to you.)

> LEADER NOTE
> **Tip:** Let the list stand. You don't need to argue anyone off it. You might ask, "Why does that one feel out of reach?" Forgiving isn't forgetting, trusting again or removing all the consequences (see Be Ready).
> **Read:** Romans 12:17–21, especially "as far as it depends on you" (v18).
> **Careful:** This one can land close to home, even with the line in parentheses. Someone may be thinking of abuse, an affair or a death. Don't ask for details, and don't tell anyone what they should feel by now. If someone shares something painful or isn't safe, thank them, follow up one-on-one and bring in your campus Life Groups pastor.

2. These twelve disciples were a group of some of Jesus' closest friends. You could even think of them like His own life group. Imagine for a second that your closest group of friends all abandoned or betrayed you. Why do you think betrayal of people close to us cuts deeper than betrayal of an enemy or stranger? What do you think it would take for you to still sit down at the table with them?

> LEADER NOTE
> **Tip:** David says it in Psalm 55: "If an enemy were insulting me, I could endure it... But it is you, a man like myself, my companion, my close friend" (vv12–13).
> **Aha:** Jesus knew who was going to betray him when he washed their feet that night (John 13:2–5, 11). Nothing in the story says he skipped anyone.
> **Careful:** "I don't know if I could" is an honest answer. For someone who was badly hurt, sitting down at the table may not be safe or wise. Don't push.

LIVE IT

1. Grace, mercy, and love are gifts we give, not rewards to be earned. That means love often goes first, before anyone has earned it. Try putting your own name in that sentence: "___ goes first." What could it look like for you to go first in a relationship in your life this week?

> LEADER NOTE
> **Make it concrete:** Have people say the sentence with their own name, then name one step: a call, an apology, a coffee, a first text. They don't have to say who it's with. Write the steps down (with their OK) and ask next week.
> **Tip:** Going first doesn't guarantee anything. Reconciliation takes two people, and you can only do your part (Romans 12:18).
> **Careful:** Going first doesn't mean reopening contact with someone who isn't safe. If that's the relationship on someone's mind, help them pick a different step and follow up one-on-one.

2. When we understand what Jesus did for us, it becomes much easier to do it for others. What helps you understand and remember what Jesus did for you?

> LEADER NOTE
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> **Tip:** Jesus gave them a meal to remember by: "do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:24–25). People might also name reading the Gospels, telling their own story out loud, a song, or a friend who reminds them.
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> **Close:** Read Colossians 3:13 together, then pray.

You don't have to have every answer. Create safety, guide reflection, point people to Jesus. **Thank you for leading.**

LEADER EXTRAS *Not in your group's guide*

OPTIONAL EXTRA: KINSHIP QUESTION

When did someone make room for you when you were the new person?

How: Ask it after the Warm Up. Go around the circle, 60–90 seconds each, and say out loud that passing is fine. It isn't about the sermon, and it doesn't need to be. It just sits next to a week about someone going first.

OPTIONAL EXTRA: MEMORIZE IT

Colossians 3:13 "Forgive as the Lord forgave you."

How: Say it together to close the night and once more to open next week.

BE READY: WHAT TO SAY

"If I forgive them, do I have to trust them again?" No. Forgiving isn't forgetting, trusting again or removing all the consequences. It's returning good for evil and letting God take care of the rest (Romans 12:17–21). Reconciliation takes two people, and some relationships aren't safe to go back to. **"What would one step look like that doesn't put you back in harm's way?"**	**"What they did is unforgivable."** Don't argue, and don't make it smaller than it is. Forgiving something this big usually takes a long time. The place to start is what Jesus did for us: "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us" (2 Corinthians 5:21). **"What would it look like to bring this to Jesus first?" Then pray for them.**
"I'm not a traitor." Peter said that too: "I never will" (v33). And most of us feel guilty about the bad things we do and far less guilty about the good things we don't do (James 4:17). **"Where do you know the good you ought to do, and you haven't done it?"**	**"I just don't feel loving toward them."** You don't have to. Love is something you do. Jesus asked for the cup to be taken from him, and he still went (Matthew 26:39). Everything in 1 Corinthians 13:4–7 is something you can decide to do, and loving your enemy doesn't mean liking your enemy. **"What on that list could you do this week?"**

SET THE ROOM

Line up three readers before group for Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:10 and Ephesians 2:4–5 (Know It 3). Think about your own answer to Live It 1 ahead of time. You'll want to go first. And read the note on Share It 1 before you get there.

GO DEEPER: FOR YOUR PREP

What was on the table Exodus 12 lays out the meal: a year-old lamb without defect, its blood on the door frames, bitter herbs and bread without yeast, eaten ready to leave (Exodus 12:5–11). Paul makes the connection: "Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed" (1 Corinthians 5:7).	**The blood of the covenant** At Sinai, Moses sprinkled blood on the people and called it "the blood of the covenant" (Exodus 24:8). Jeremiah promised a new covenant in which God would "forgive their wickedness" (Jeremiah 31:31–34). Jesus picks up both at this table (v28).	**Reclining, not sitting** Verse 20 says they were reclining. Picture a low table, with people on cushions, propped on an elbow. That's how one disciple ends up leaning back against Jesus (John 13:23–25). Leonardo painted his version in the 1490s, with a long table.
A towel and an argument John puts the foot washing at this meal (John 13:1–17). Luke says the disciples also argued that night about which of them was the greatest (Luke 22:24). Foot washing was a servant's job, and Jesus got up and did it.	**"Surely you don't mean me?"** In Greek, the way both questions are asked (vv22, 25) expects the answer no. It's closer to "It isn't me, is it?" Judas asks it the same way the others do, and Jesus answers, "You have said so."	**The hymn** "When they had sung a hymn" (v30). Passover tradition closes with Psalms 115–118. If that's what they sang, Jesus' last song before his arrest included "The stone the builders rejected" (Psalm 118:22).

Strike the shepherd	Peter and Judas	Love has guidelines
In verse 31 Jesus quotes Zechariah 13:7, and his next sentence is about meeting them in Galilee. The angel repeats it at the empty tomb (Matthew 28:7). When Jesus sends word himself, he calls them "my brothers" (Matthew 28:10).	Both failed Jesus that night. Peter wept (Matthew 26:75) and was restored (John 21:15–19). Judas was seized with remorse, gave back the money and took his own life (Matthew 27:3–5). Go gently if your group goes here. Someone may have lost a person to suicide.	Love helps, but it doesn't enable: "The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat" (2 Thessalonians 3:10). God disciplines the ones he loves (Hebrews 12:6). The church confronts open, unrepentant sin (1 Corinthians 5).