

Bible Study August 2, 2023

JOHN 13 (AMPLIFIED VERSION)

The Lord's Supper

¹ Now before the Passover Feast, Jesus knew that His hour had come [and it was time] for Him to leave this world and return to the Father. Having [greatly] loved His own who were in the world, He loved them [and continuously loves them with His perfect love] to the end (eternally).

Jesus knew he would be betrayed by one of his disciples, denied by another, and deserted by all of them for a time. Still, he “loved them to the very end.” God knows us completely, as Jesus knew his disciples (2:24-25; 6:64). He knows the sins we have committed and the ones we will yet commit. Still, he loves us. How do you respond to that kind of love?

² It was during supper, when the devil had already put [the thought of] betraying Jesus into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son,

Philippians 4:6-8 (AMP)

⁶ Do not be anxious or worried about anything, but in everything [every circumstance and situation] by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, continue to make your [specific] requests known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God [that peace which reassures the heart, that peace] which transcends all understanding, [that peace which] stands guard over your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus [is yours].⁸ Finally, believers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable and worthy of respect, whatever is right and confirmed by God's word, whatever is pure and wholesome, whatever is lovely and brings peace, whatever is admirable and of good repute; if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think continually on these things [center your mind on them, and implant them in your heart].

³ that Jesus, knowing that the Father had put everything into His hands, and that He had come from God and was [now] returning to God, ⁴ got up from supper, took off His [outer] robe, and taking a [servant's] towel, He tied it around His waist.

A. This is an area where people can struggle, going from served to servant

1 Corinthians 9:19-23 (MSG)

¹⁹⁻²³ Even though I am free of the demands and expectations of everyone, I have voluntarily become a servant to any and all in order to reach a wide range of people: religious, nonreligious, meticulous moralists, loose-living immoralists, the defeated, the demoralized—whoever. I didn't take on their way of life. I kept my bearings in Christ—but I entered their world and tried to experience things from their point of view.

I've become just about every sort of servant there is in my attempts to lead those I meet into a God-saved life. I did all this because of the Message. I didn't just want to talk about it; I wanted to be in on it!

Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

⁵ Then He poured water into the basin and began washing the disciples' feet and wiping them with the towel which was tied around His waist. ⁶ When He came to Simon Peter, he said to Him, "Lord, are You going to wash my feet?" ⁷ Jesus replied to him, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but you will [fully] understand it later."

Imagine being Peter and watching Jesus wash the others' feet, all the while moving closer to you. Seeing his master behave like a slave must have confused Peter. He still did not understand Jesus' teaching that to be a leader a person must be a servant. This uncomfortable truth challenges leaders who find it difficult to serve those under their authority. How do you treat those who work under you, whether children, employees, or volunteers?

⁸ Peter said to Him, "You will never wash my feet!" Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with Me [we can have nothing to do with each other]." ⁹ Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, [in that case, wash] not only my feet, but also my hands and my head!"

When Jesus responded, "Unless I wash you, you won't belong to me," he may have meant (1) that unless he washed away Peter's sins by his death on the cross, Peter could have no relationship with him; or (2) that unless Peter submitted to him and allowed him to minister in this way, Peter would never learn the lesson of servanthood. Either way, Peter seemed to grasp the significance of Jesus' words, for he then wanted to be bathed completely: "Then wash my hands and head as well, Lord, not just my feet!"

¹⁰ Jesus said to him, "Anyone who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, and is completely clean. And you [My disciples] are clean, but not all of you." ¹¹ For He knew who was going to betray Him; for that reason He said, "Not all of you are clean."

¹² So when He had washed their feet and put on His [outer] robe and reclined at the table again, He said to them, "Do you understand what I have done for you? ¹³ You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you are right in doing so, for that is who I am. ¹⁴ So if I, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet as well. ¹⁵ For I gave you [this as] an example, so that you should do [in turn] as I did to you. ¹⁶ I assure you and most solemnly say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ If you know these things, you are blessed [happy and favored by God] if you put them into practice [and faithfully do them].

John 13–17 reveals what Jesus said to his disciples on the night before his death. These words were all spoken in one evening when, with only the disciples as his audience, he gave final instructions to prepare them for his death and resurrection, events that would change their lives forever.

Jesus was the model servant, and he showed his servant attitude to his disciples. Washing guests' feet was a job for a household servant to carry out when guests arrived. But Jesus wrapped a towel around his waist, as the lowliest slave would do, and washed and dried his disciples' feet.

If even he, God in the flesh, serves so willingly, we—his followers—must also be servants, willing to serve in any way that glorifies God. What would that kind of service mean in your home, your workplace, or your ministry? Are you willing to follow Jesus' example of serving? Whom can you serve today? Jesus blesses those who not only agree that humble service is Christ's way but also follow through and do it (13:17).

¹⁸ I am not speaking of all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but [this has happened] in order that the Scripture may be fulfilled: 'HE WHO EATS MY BREAD HAS RAISED UP HIS HEEL AGAINST ME [as My enemy].'¹⁹ From now on I am telling you [what will happen] before it occurs, so that when it does take place you may believe that I am He [who I say I am—the Christ, the Anointed, the Messiah].²⁰ I assure you and most solemnly say to you, the one who receives and welcomes whomever I send receives Me; and the one who receives Me receives Him who sent Me [in that same way]."

Jesus did not wash his disciples' feet just to get them to show greater hospitality to each other. His far greater goal was to extend his mission on earth after he was gone. These men were to move into the world serving God, serving each other, and serving all people to whom they would take the message of salvation.

Jesus Predicts His Betrayal

²¹ After Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "I assure you and most solemnly say to you, one of you will betray Me and hand Me over."

²² The disciples began looking at one another, puzzled and disturbed as to whom He could mean.

Judas was not the obvious betrayer. After all, he was the one the disciples were trusting to keep the money (12:6; 13:29).

²³ One of His disciples, whom Jesus loved (esteemed), was leaning against Jesus' chest.²⁴ So Simon Peter motioned to him (John) and [quietly] asked [him to ask Jesus] of whom He was speaking.²⁵ Then leaning back against Jesus' chest, he (John) asked Him [privately], "Lord, who is it?"²⁶ Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I am going to give this piece [of bread] after I have dipped it." So when He had dipped the piece of bread [into the dish], He gave it to Judas, son of Simon Iscariot.

The honored guest at a meal was often singled out like this.

²⁷ After [Judas had taken] the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, "What you are going to do, do quickly [without delay]."

Satan's part in the betrayal of Jesus does not remove any of the responsibility from Judas. He gave in to Satan's prompting. Disillusioned because Jesus was talking about dying rather than setting up his Kingdom, Judas may have been trying to force Jesus' hand and make him use his power to prove he was the Messiah. Or perhaps Judas, not understanding Jesus' mission, no longer believed that Jesus was God's chosen one. Whatever Judas thought, Satan assumed that Jesus' death would end his mission and thwart God's plan. Like Judas, Satan did not know that Jesus' death was the most important part of God's plan all along.

²⁸ But no one reclining at the table knew why He said this to him.²⁹ Some thought that, since Judas [as the treasurer of the group] had the money box, Jesus was telling him, "Buy

what we need for the feast,” or that he was to give something to the poor. ³⁰ *After taking the piece of bread, he went out immediately; and it was night.*

³¹ So when Judas had left, Jesus said, “Now is [the time for] the Son of Man [to be] glorified, and God is glorified in Him; ³² [if God is glorified in Him,] God will also glorify Him (the Son) in Himself, and will glorify Him at once. ³³ Little children, I am with you [only] a little longer. You will look for Me and, as I told the Jews, so I tell you now, ‘Where I am going, you are not able to come.’ ³⁴ I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, so you too are to love one another.

To love others was not a new commandment (see Leviticus 19:18), but to love others as much as Jesus loved others was revolutionary. Now we are to love others based on Jesus’ sacrificial love for us. Such love will not only bring unbelievers to faith in Jesus but also keep believers strong and united in a world hostile to God. Jesus was a living example of God’s love, as we are to be as well. When you are faced with Jesus’ teaching, do you automatically think about the people in your life who are hard to love or whom you feel like you can’t love? The love Jesus calls us to show seems humanly impossible. In order to have this kind of love, we need to humble ourselves by realizing that Jesus died for us and our unlovely sins. Then we need the Holy Spirit to pour out God’s love in our hearts so we can love others (Romans 5:5).

³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you have love and unselfish concern for one another.”

Jesus says that our Christlike love will show we are his disciples. Do people see petty bickering, jealousy, and division in your church? Or do they know you are Jesus’ followers by your love for one another?

Love is more than simply warm feelings; love reveals itself in action. How can we love others as Jesus loves us? By helping even when we are too busy; by giving sacrificially; by devoting energy to others’ welfare rather than our own; by absorbing hurts from others without complaining, fighting back, or seeking revenge. These are just a few examples, but this kind of loving is hard to do. That is why people notice when you do it. When they do, you can explain that your actions are empowered by a supernatural source. The Bible has another beautiful description of love in 1 Corinthians 13.

³⁶ Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, where are You going?” Jesus answered, “Where I am going, you cannot follow Me now; but you will be able to follow later.” ³⁷ Peter said to Him, “Lord, why cannot I follow You now? I will lay down my life for You!” ³⁸ Jesus answered, “Will you [really] lay down your life for Me? I assure you and most solemnly say to you, before a rooster crows you will deny and completely disown Me three times.

John describes these few moments in clear detail. We can see that Jesus knew exactly what was going to happen. He knew about Judas and Peter, but he did not change the situation, nor did he stop loving them. In the same way, Jesus knows exactly what you will do to hurt him. Yet he still loves you unconditionally and will forgive you whenever you ask him. Judas couldn’t understand this and tragically ended his life in suicide. Peter understood, and despite his shortcomings, his life ended triumphantly because he never let go of his faith in the one who loved him.

Peter proudly told Jesus that he was ready to die for him, but Jesus corrected him. He knew Peter would deny that he knew Jesus that very night to protect himself (18:15-18, 25-27). In our

enthusiasm, we can make impulsive promises, but God knows the extent of our commitment. Paul tells us not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought (Romans 12:3). Instead of bragging, demonstrate your commitment step-by-step as you grow in your knowledge of God's Word and in your faith.