

VCBC SLG—The Gospel of John
Lesson #7

A Recap of the last three chapters

Chapter 10:

- Geographically should belong to the previous three chapters in that it brings Jesus back to the other side of Jordan where He met John the Baptist
- The narratives here also continue with the theme of where He comes from with an even greater emphasis on “**I and the Father are one**” (10:30)
- Since the theme of the narratives are the same, John chooses to combine the current discourse after the Feast of the Tabernacle (with Jesus likely having left Jerusalem since it was not safe for Him to stay) with another discourse some three months later at the Feast of Dedication (10: 22-39)

Chapter 11:

- The raising of Lazarus, is perhaps, the greatest sign that both caused many to believe in Jesus and certainly led directly to His arrest in Jerusalem (11: 45ff)
- Through this miraculous sign, it powerfully demonstrates Jesus’ power as God in giving life with the famous declaration that “**I AM the Resurrection and the Life**” (11:25)

Chapter 12

This begins the final week (Passion Week) of Christ on earth, with His entrance into Jerusalem—the narratives are already covered by the Synoptic Gospels, except John’s emphasis of the trustworthiness of Jesus testimony continues with the mention of the Father’s voice from heaven in the process plus Jesus’ clear emphasis also of who He is—“**When he (the one who believes in me) looks at me, he sees the one who sent me!**” (12:45)

Since we did not have time to cover chapter 12 last Sunday, allow me to combine chapters 12 & 13 together today.

Chapter 12—The Beginning of the End (of Jesus’ earthly ministry—the Passion Week)

1. With chapters 13-17 focusing on a more personal discourse by Jesus with His inner circle of disciples (in the Upper Room), the teaching to the crowd in the open will find its end in this chapter, as far as John’s narratives of the testimonies by Jesus are concerned.

12: 1-11—The Anointing of Jesus by Mary

Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. 2 Here a dinner was given in Jesus’ honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. 3 Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus’ feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

4 But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, 5 “Why wasn’t this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year’s wages.” 6 He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it. 7 “Leave her alone,” Jesus

replied. **“It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. 8 You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me.”**

Of course, we cannot use this as an excuse for not caring for the poor, but the important fact is: nothing can take the place of Christ in our heart. Mary always cherishes and values Jesus and would seize every opportunity to be near the Lord—it’s all about love! Here, Mary touches the lonely heart of the Lord—when no one else understood. The challenge to us is: do we—do we understand the heart of the Lord, even in this hour in history? Mary did!

9 Meanwhile a large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. 10 So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well, 11 for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and believing in him.

This account has already been covered by the Synoptic in Mt. 26: 6-13; Mk. 14:3-9; Lk. 7: 37-39, but John chooses to supplement with his emphasis on this event being right after the raising of Lazarus, with the following unique features

2. The one anointing Jesus was none other than Mary, the sister of Lazarus;
3. The intentional anointing by Mary (saved for) was meant for His burial, meaning of all people, it seems that only Mary believed and took to heart the words of Jesus about His death;
4. The one who criticized Mary was really Judas (though led others to agree with him), and that he was a thief all along; and
5. Many had come to see for themselves that Lazarus had indeed been raised from the dead, thus coming to believe in Jesus (going over—as if it’s a competition!)
6. The determination by the priests to kill even Lazarus, in John’s narrative, only served to prove that the miracle was real!

Note: Both Matthew’s and Mark’s accounts only name Simon the leper as the one opening his home and a certain woman poured ointment on Jesus, John now chooses to name the woman as Mary. Other the other hand, Luke’s account, though of a similar event was definitely a different occasion,—the home, the host, the woman and the timing, all pointed to a different incident!

12: 12-19—The Lowly Entrance into Jerusalem

12 The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. 13 They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting,

“Hosanna! [Save us!/]” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the king of Israel!”

[Ps. 118: 25, 26—preceded by the famous words: “This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it”]

14 Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as it is written:

15 “Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion;

see, your king is coming,

seated on a donkey’s colt.” (*John’s briefer version of Zechariah’s in LXX*)

[Zechariah 9:9 “Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”]

16 At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that these things had been done to him.

There is no doubt that the rabbis understood Zechariah 9:9 refers to their Messiah, but how did they reconcile their idea of their triumphant Messiah of Daniel with this lowly Messiah riding on a colt? Lightfoot has this insight to share with us from the Talmud, as he expounds on the entrance of Christ into Jerusalem:

“This triumph of Christ completes a double prophecy: 1. This prophecy of Zechariah here mentioned. 2. The taking to themselves the Paschal lamb, for this was the very day on which it was to be taken, according to the command of the law, Exod. Xii. 3; ‘In the tenth day of the month, they shall take to them every man a lamb.’”

It scarce appears to the Talmudists, how those words of Daniel concerning the Messiah, that ‘he comes with the clouds of heaven,’ are consistent with these words of Zechariah, that ‘he comes sitting upon an ass.’ ‘If (say they) the Israelites be good, then he shall come with the clouds of heaven; but if not good, then riding upon as ass.”

Thou art much mistaken O Jews: for he comes ‘in the clouds of heaven,’ as judge and revenger, because you are evil and very wicked; but sitting up an ass, not because you are, but because he is good...King Sapores said to Samuel (?), ‘You say your Messiah will come upon as ass, I will send him a brave horse.’ He answers him, ‘You have not a horse with a hundred spots as is his ass.’ In the greatest humility of the Messiah they dream of grandeur even in his very ass.” (Commentary on the NT from the Talmud and Hebraica, Vol. 2, 270-271)

In other words, the rabbis still could not come to grip with the fact that the power of their Messiah is fully revealed in His lowliness. No wonder they rejected the crucified Christ!

17 Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word. 18 Many people, because they had heard that he had performed this sign, went out to meet him. 19 So the Pharisees said to one another, “See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!”

Note; such an exciting atmosphere only served to cause delusions in the mind of the disciples, causing them to drop their guard against the drastic turn of events that followed suit, hence (perhaps) the lengthy discourse by Jesus in the Upper Room.

12: 20-36—The Father’s Testimony (I)

20 Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the festival. 21 They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. “Sir,” they said, “we would like to see Jesus.” 22 Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus.

23 Jesus replied, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24 Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. 25 Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26 Whoever serves me must

follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.

27 “Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. 28 Father, glorify your name!”

Prompted by the visit of the Greeks (perhaps a sign that the good news is reaching the gentiles), the Lord Jesus saw His hour of death drawing near, to the point He seemed to be speaking to Himself in v. 27, ““Now my heart is troubled and what shall I say? “ With these few words, we gain insight into the struggle of the Son of God. Allow me to share with you Lenski’s thoughts in this respect:

“In the request of the Greeks Jesus sees His own death standing before Him. While He calls it a glorification of the Son of man, in particular as regards the glorious fruit that will result, nevertheless, this impending death stirs the soul of Jesus to its very depth. ‘Now my soul *has been troubled*. And what shall I say? Father, deliver me out of this hour? But no - for this reason I came into this hour’. Jesus is not addressing the disciples and the bystanders. This is a monolog, uttered before a higher presence; yet uttered audibly for those at hand to hear. They are granted a glimpse into what transpires in the soul of Jesus. (It) reveals what Jesus feels in His human soul as the death shadow begins actually to envelop Him. *The perfect tense* is intensive...for the agitation that is now upon Jesus reaches back, although its present intensity leads Him now to reveal it.

Not by any means coldly, indifferently, or without feeling is Jesus going into His death. He was perfectly aware of all that His death entailed. His was not to be a death like that of the Christian for whom the terrors of death have been removed by the cancellation of sin and guilt; nor like the death of the unbeliever who is blind or realizes only in part what awaits him. Jesus was to die with all the world’s sin and guilt upon Him. The curse and damnation of that guilt was to strike Him and to crush out His life. All the dreadfulness of this impending death was fully revealed to Him; He saw all that was awaiting Him.

Moreover, He was going into His death voluntarily. No power compelled Him save His own will, which was one with that of His Father. He was free even now to withdraw from that death. But since the hour has come, the act of sacrifice is about to begin, the frightfulness, the utter horror, the inconceivable dreadfulness of death came over the soul of Jesus. All that was human in Him recoiled from the rending ordeal, just as our body, to use a weak comparison, shrinks from some painful contact and quivers when it begins yet submits and endures, no matter what the pain, held to the agony by the power of the will. The sinless, holy Jesus, God’s only-begotten Son, was to stoop beneath the damning

guilt of the world and by His own death as a man to expiate that guilt. Thus was His soul shaken in this hour.” (Lenski, John, 868-9)

What a Savior we have in Jesus Christ!

12: 20-36—The Father’s Testimony (II)

“Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and will glorify it again.” 29 The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him. 30 Jesus said, “This voice was for your benefit, not mine. 31 Now is the time for judgment on this world (*except that He was the one who would take on that judgment*); now the prince of this world will be driven out. 32 And I, when I am lifted up [*hanged*] from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” 33 He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die.

We might ask: how can it be, if they could not figure out what is said? Well, perhaps, they have heard, just like John has, but could not figure out what it meant and assume it was merely thundering sound. The more perceptive would recognize at least that it was a voice from heaven!

34 The crowd spoke up, “We have heard from the Law that the Messiah will remain forever, so how can you say, ‘The Son of Man must be lifted up’? Who is this ‘Son of Man’?” (*Obviously, they understood being lifted up meant He would not “remain”*)

35 Then Jesus told them, “You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. Whoever walks in the dark does not know where they are going. 36 Believe in the light while you have the light, so that you may become children of light.” (*i.e. walk in the light = believe in Him = being children of light*)

When He had finished speaking, Jesus left and hid himself from them.

Here: one more time, John illustrates that as Jesus has insisted, the Father was testifying for Him and His testimony there is true!

12: 37-50—Jesus’ (final) public Testimony about Himself

37 Even after Jesus had performed so many signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him. 38 This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet:

“Lord, who has believed our message
and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”

39 For this reason they could not believe, because, as Isaiah says elsewhere:

40 “He has blinded their eyes
and hardened their hearts,
so they can neither see with their eyes,
nor understand with their hearts,
nor turn—and I would heal them.”

41 Isaiah said this because he saw Jesus’ glory and spoke about him.

For a fuller quote by Jesus Himself, see Matthew 13: 14-16. :He has hardened their hearts = God hardened the heart of Pharaoh and Tom Rees insightfully explains; “The same sun that melts the wax, hardens the clay,” meaning it all a matter of the heart’s condition. The word of God can melt or harden a heart, depending on its condition!

42 Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not openly acknowledge their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; 43 for they loved human praise more than praise from God.

If we measure the success of Jesus' ministry by immediate results, we have to say that He was a failure because even with His sinless life, His powerful message and after He "had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they (the Jews) still would not believe in Him" (Jn. 12:37). Even among the small group of followers, one of them betrayed Him for thirty pieces of silver, and the remainder fled in the face of persecution.

However, John is quick to tell us that, in the midst of such apparent failures, **"Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in Him. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue"** (Jn. 12:42). I did not take it as a totally negative statement, although John also adds that, "for they loved praise from men more than praise from God" (Jn. 12:43).

The truth of the matter is the seed planted by the Lord, through His sinless life, His powerful message and His many miraculous signs, have eventually born fruit in that those who believed in Him, like Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, woke up from their fear and openly acknowledged Him after His death, and many more did so after His resurrection. It was a matter of timing — God's timing!

This is an important reminder to all of us that we should not measure success in God's ministry by immediate results, and should firmly believe in the living power of the seed of the gospel, and that our labor in the Lord will not be in vain. If we remain faithful to our charge, it is also a matter of timing — God's timing — that the seed we plant will bear fruit for the sake of God's Kingdom

44 Then Jesus cried out, "Whoever believes in me does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me. 45 The one who looks at me is seeing the one who sent me. 46 I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.

47 "If anyone hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge that person. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. 48 There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; the very words I have spoken will condemn them at the last day. 49 For I did not speak on my own, but the Father who sent me commanded me to say all that I have spoken. 50 I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say."

So, with these final words preached by Jesus in the open, John reiterates that

- 7. Who Jesus is: we look at Him, we see the Father**
- 8. Believe in Him, we will be saved unto eternal life**
- 9. Reject Him, we will be judged and condemned at the Last Day**

10. He is thus, “the true light of the world” (Prologue 1:9)

End of the First 12 Chapters

As we come to the end of the first 12 chapters of John’s Gospel, you will have noticed that it contains, so far, very little ethical teachings like the Sermon on the Mount as the Synoptic Gospels do, and definitely no spiritual growth teachings that, by that time, many epistles have covered. The very main focus is obvious—to use the many testimonies of eye-witnesses to affirm and prove Who Jesus is beyond a shadow of a doubt, or as John puts it himself:

“30 Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” (20: 30-31)

The next 5 chapters, on the other hands, would focus on Jesus last words to His own inner circle of disciples during and after the Last Supper, leading up to His arrest on Thursday night (which would be the beginning of Friday according to the Jewish calendar), tried by Pontius Pilate in the early morning of Friday, and immediately crucified on the same day with His body taken down right before the beginning of Sabbath).

Upper Room Discourse #1—Washing of Feet—Chapter 13

13: 1-2—Precursor to the Upper Room Discourse

“It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for Him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved His own who were in the world, he loved them to the end (or he now showed them the full extent of His love).”

The context of the next few chapters of what He did and spoke to and in the presence of the disciples is made clear

11. It was the “hour” for Him to leave them (all by themselves?) and go back to the Father (after accomplishing His plan of salvation) and
12. Since these disciples whom He loved would still be “in the world” while He would not be, He wanted to “bare His soul” as it were, so that they would know He loved them to the end, i.e. He would not leave them “high and dry”—especially, as we learn in this discourse that
13. He would send “another” Counselor in His place—the Holy Spirit to be with them (chs.14 & 16)
14. They will still remain in His love as branches remain in vine (ch.15) and
15. That they are in His prayer (or that He has prayed for them)—the High Priest Prayer (ch.17)

13: 3-17—The Setting of an example—Feet Washing

“2 The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted (*put in his heart*) Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. 3 Jesus knew that the Father had put (*given*) all things under his power (*into His hands*), and that he had come from God and was returning to God;

Leading up to this rather extraordinary act of feet washing, John prefaced it by explaining to us what seemed to have led to this act (as indicated by the original sentence structure)

1. The devil had already prompted Judas to betray Jesus, and that
2. He knew (or knowing) what was said in v.3...

1.Regarding Judas' imminent act of betrayal, Jesus spoke plainly using the feet-washing as a springboard to elaborate on his betrayal--It is worth noting that the devil has already put in Judas' heart the desire or decision to betray Jesus and we wonder why he would choose this occasion to betray Jesus:

--It's more than likely that Judas not only sensed that the Jewish leaders were determined to arrest and kill Jesus, just that they did not want to do it in the open lest a commotion or even riot might break out and would give the Romans another excuse to "take away their place" (11:48) and since the Upper Room was chosen at the last minute that he could not have known beforehand, it would be a good excuse for him to somehow leave and inform the Jewish leaders,

--Except that he would have no idea the leaders were willing to pay him for this betrayal or by what amount?

--If Judas was simply disappointed that Jesus, even if He was the Messiah, would not be leading a revolution or an uprising to topple the Romans and restore the glory of the nation of Israel (as he likely hoped for as he first followed Jesus) and wanted out, because of fear or self-preservation—he could have just walked out and disappeared and returned to "Iscariot"—wherever it was—the word denotes a federation of cities.

--However, Judas chose to make money out of Jesus in whom he thought he had invested or wasted some years of his life—hence the comment on his greed in 12:6.

Concerning that Jesus knowing that

- **the Father had put all things under his power (hands), and that**
- **He had come from God and was returning to God;**

It is obviously not implying that Jesus did not know before then, but that perhaps a better way to say is: "In view of the fact that"

- Even before His death and resurrection, from the beginning (see Prologue), all things have been given into His hands—all things under His authority as the Father has so willed, and that
- It's almost time to return to Father God

Therefore, out of love for these disciples who will be left on earth to continue to be His witness, and victory over sin and the devil are in essence a foregone conclusion, He now will set an example to teach His beloved disciples—that seems to be the context of the following act!

4 so He got up from the meal, took off His outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around His waist. 5 After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

6 He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

7 Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

8 "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

9 "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

10 Jesus answered, “Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you.” 11 For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not everyone was clean.

The setting:

“By New Testament times many Jews had adopted the Roman style of dining. The account of the Last Supper in John 13 suggests that Jesus and the disciples were following this custom in a modified form...there had to be room for all of Jesus’ inner circle of 12...so it may have been the case that four couches were arranged around a central table. The diners were reclining as they ate and John is said to have been leaning against the breast of Jesus, who was naturally in the position of a superior.” (Arch. Study Bible, 1748)

However, does John’s position signify “he was Jesus’ closest friend” or as the historian Livy recorded that “a type of hierarchy developed in this reclining system. The inferior persons’ head lay near the torso of the superior”? (Ditto)

In any case, we are certain that the washing of feet is the task of the slave.

- While, as Jews, every one of them would have followed the very important custom of Jewish culture to have their hands and feet washed as they entered the upper room
- So as Jesus suddenly, when the meal was in progress, got up and washed each of their feet, it would be a complete surprise and Jesus had never done that before to them
- Now, to allow Jesus to wash their feet, at least, in the mind of Peter, who truly believed in Who Jesus is, was certainly a “no! no!”
- It appears that Jesus did not begin with him, and so, he would have been quite upset that the other disciples allowed Jesus to wash their feet and said nothing
- So when “Jesus came to him”, he was ready and even Jesus said he would understand (or realize) why He did it later (which likely refers to after His death and resurrection), Peter still insisted, **“you shall never wash my feet.”**

Jesus’s reply is very significant **“Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.”**

- As much as Peter really did not understand what Jesus meant
- One thing he knew: he wanted to belong to Jesus! To have no part with Him is simply unthinkable! And so, without much understanding he said, **“not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!”—Peter wanted to totally, completely belong to Jesus!** How could our Lord not be pleased with Peter!

But Jesus wants Peter (and the rest) to know the actual meaning of being “clean” (without being clean, as in cleansing of our sins), we can have no part with Him! And so He explains:

“Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean...”

- “You are clean”—i.e. cleansed of your sin, because
- (a) You have taken a bath already—referring obviously to baptism, not the ritual itself, by the truth behind it—the believing in Jesus as the Son of God. They have been forgiven and the whole person now belongs to Jesus; and
- (b) Yet, as the feet symbolizes that, as they walk along those dirty, unpaved roads in Palestine, they would have caught much dust and dirt—just as we live our lives in the world, our feet need cleansing all the time, as John alludes to in I John 1:8-9, as he writes not to non-believers, but to those who are believers already
- **“If we claim to be without sin (even after conversion) we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive our**

sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”—John indeed has come to understand or realize the meaning of Jesus’ foot-washing!

- Yes, our status has changed into being one of God’s children (and that relationship will never change), but our continuous sins do hamper our fellowship with our Lord, and we continue to need Him to wash our feet with His blood!

But, for Judas, although it seems that his feet were being washed too, but since he had never taken a bath—not truly believed in Christ Jesus—his feet washing amounted to nothing!

12 When He had finished washing their feet, He put on his clothes and returned to His place. “Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked them.

- **13 “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am.**
- **14 Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet,**
- **you also should wash one another’s feet. 15 I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.**

16 Very truly I tell you,

- **no servant (*the word is slave*) is greater than his master (*the word is Lord*),**
- **nor is a messenger (*the word is apostle*) greater than the one who sent him.**
- **17 Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.**

The meaning appears to be of two folds, given the context

(1) The action that caught them by surprise and discomfort, because Jesus took on the role of a slave and clearly He wanted them to follow His example, especially within the context of how to treat fellow brothers and sisters in Christ

- Not as a slave among slaves, but as a slave toward a master
- And that is what Paul understands too as he writes in I Cor. 9:19
- **“Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone”**

I find that my problem (and I guess so is yours), is that

- We have no problem recognizing that we are slaves before the Lord
- But when it comes to other brothers and sisters in Christ?
- We also understand that we are all slaves, except that we often behave (or desire to be) like “chief of slave”, or perhaps at least, a ‘senior slave.’”

I once attend a very important conference among Christian leaders, and on the final night where the president of that well respected organization was giving his farewell speech emphasizing what he used as his motto in leading the organization all these years, that of being a servant, he ended it with performing a feet-washing ceremony.

As I somehow expected, he chose a pastor from a 3rd World country and invited him to come up to have his feet washed by hm.

But something unexpected happened, as he knelt and finished washing this pastor’s feet in a basin, he reached out to grab a towel. To his horror, the towel was not on the chair behind him. Immediately, he yelled out in a loud voice to his assistant, “John (not his real name), where is the towel!”

I felt very bad for him, because it could have happened to me

- As much as we preach about being slaves
- We, especially pastors, behave more like the “chief of slaves!”
- And that is not who Jesus is
- He served us as if we were a master—having no “right” of His own!

(2) “Washing one another’s feet”

Apart from serving others as their slaves

- The context is clear from Jesus’ example
- And that is just as He washed our feet as slaves, the purpose of which is to clean the dirt off our feet—i.e. to forgive us
- And so, the most basic form of serving others as a slave
- Is not to claim our right (for justice, for fairness or revenge), but to forgive one another
- If we claim that we do serve others as their slaves, and yet hold grudges against them, or demanding what we think is rightfully ours—we are not washing one another’s feet!

13: 18-30—The Betrayal by Judas

18 “I am not referring to all of you; I know those I have chosen.

- **But this is to fulfill this passage of Scripture: ‘He who shared my bread has turned[a] against me.’[Ps.41:9]**

19 “I am telling you now before it happens,

- **so that when it does happen you will believe that I AM** (*original does not have “who I am”.*)

20 Very truly I tell you, whoever accepts anyone I send accepts me; and whoever accepts me accepts the one who sent me.”

21 After he had said this, Jesus was troubled in spirit and testified,

- **“Very truly I tell you, one of you is going to betray me.”**

22 His disciples stared at one another, at a loss to know which of them he meant. 23 One of them, the disciple whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to him. 24 Simon Peter motioned to this disciple and said, “Ask him which one he means.”

25 Leaning back against Jesus, he asked him, “Lord, who is it?”

26 Jesus answered,

- **“It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish.”**
- **Then, dipping the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot.**
- **27 As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him.**

So Jesus told him,

- **“What you are about to do, do quickly.”**

28 But no one at the meal understood why Jesus said this to him.

- **29 Since Judas had charge of the money, some thought Jesus was telling him to buy what was needed for the festival, or to give something to the poor.**

30 As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night. (If they started eating after dusk, perhaps it would be around 8 pm)

Several key points to note:

1. What is meant by betrayal to the disciples:
 - Jesus did not really spell out what and how He would be betrayed or its extent
 - That prompted to disciples to ask according to Matthew, “Is it I, Lord?” (Mat. 26:22)
 - By that they could think of many short comings or sins they have done against the Lord, not the least was their bickering about who was the greatest not long ago
 - Or, for some, the thought of leaving Him quietly because for fear of suffering, but

- To publicly denounce Him, or even side with the enemies—not a chance, right?
 - So, even though Jesus eventually clearly pointed to Judas, they seemed to play down its significance.
- 2. Judas the “fake” disciple
 - Yes, Judas probably was not the most “spiritual” among them
 - But it appeared he was able to fake in such a way that all 11 of them regarded him as friends and as genuine disciple of Jesus Christ
 - That’s a scary thought—and down the centuries, many such fake believers turned against the church—all we have to do is to read many of the stories of martyrs about how they were betrayed by the closest of friends.
 - But to read that “**Satan entered into him**” is terrifying! But we need to know
 - Before this, the seed of betrayal was planted in his heart (13:2)
 - In other words, he did have such a desire in him
 - And he had the choice to reject and resist such a thought, and as James says, “**Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.**” (4:7)
 - As it was, he entertained the thought and allowed Satan to control him
 - Such is the case with many who are demon-possessed and it all begins with the person willingly come into contact with Satan, either through idol worship, Zen-type of mediation or playing Ouija board.
- 3. The love of Jesus
 - However, Jesus still loved Judas
 - The washing of feet included Judas—a sign of offering of forgiveness
 - He straightly confronted Judas that He knew what he was about to do which should remind Judas about Who He really is
 - The words in vv. 18-20 were clearly directed to him:-

18 “I am not referring to all of you; I know those I have chosen. But this is to fulfill this passage of Scripture: ‘He who shared my bread has turned[a] against me.’[Ps.41:9]19 “I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that I AM (*ego eimi*)

 - And the passing of a piece of bread—as much as this points out Judas is the one, it is an invitation of fellowship, In essence, Jesus is offering him one last chance
 - But he took the bread and went ahead to befriend Satan instead of Christ, fulfilling the prophecy of Psalm 41:9.
 - That’s the kind of love Jesus has demonstrated to them and to us all
 - He loved even the worst of sinner, even His closest friend who chose to betray Him

13: 31-38—Precursor to the Upper Room Discourse unique to the Gospel of John

13: 31-32	The Mutual glorification of Father and Son
	▪ This will be elaborated in His prayer to the Father in ch.17
13: 33	The imminent departure of Jesus back to heaven
	▪ This is will be elaborated in ch.14 by Jesus
13: 34-35	A New Commandment
	▪ This is being reiterated in ch.15
13: 36-37	The prediction of Peter’s Denial
	▪ Its fulfillment is narrated in ch.18

But as we close today, allow me to consider vv. 34-35 about the New Commandment given by Jesus to the disciples

“A new commandment I give you: Love one another.

As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

By this all men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another.”

A New Commandment:

- To love your neighbor as yourself is not a new commandment, so why would Jesus say this is a New Commandment
- To understand what is meant by “new”, John has in fact given us some insight in his epistle (**I John 2:7-8**)
- **“Dear friends, I am not writing you a new command, but an old one which you have had since the beginning. This old command is the message you have heard. Yet I am writing you a new command, its truth is seen in Him and you, because the darkness is passing and the true Light is already shining.”**

In other words.

- This old commandment is now being new (or anew) because
- We did not have the power to live out this command by ourselves
- But now
 - We have seen what is love in Christ, and that
 - He walks with us, living in us to enable us to truly love one another
 - And thus it is new and
 - We have no excuse not to love as He has loved us!

The love of Christ

- And we are to love as Christ has loved us—and within the immediate context of how **“having loved His own who were in the world, He now showed them the full extent of His love”** (13:1)
 - He showed His love by washing their feet
 - Giving up all His right and became a slave to us, and
 - To forgive us by washing, not really with water, but with His own blood shed for us
 - He showed His love
 - Even to the vilest of sinners—Judas
 - The close friend who chose to betray Him
 - Not only by washing his feet also
 - But by still giving him a last chance, offering His bread—which is Himself to Judas who spurned His bread and His love!
- So, to love as He has shown the full extent of His love to us
 - We have to love one another
 - By giving up any right that we might think we have or deserve (I Cor. 9:15)
 - By becoming slave to everyone (I Cor. 9: 19)
 - By forgiving the vilest offense of our brothers and sisters against us!

By this all men will know we are His disciples

Love is not just a warm and fuzzy feeling; Love is action! Love is visible!

- As Jesus' disciples, we are first and foremost His "followers"
 - o We believe in what He believes in (faith and doctrine)
 - o We go where He goes (suffering and all)
- But these are not necessarily a true indication of His disciples
 - o **But we love as He loves**
 - **The willingness to give up all our rights**
 - **The willingness to forgive as He forgives us!**

If we live out such a life of love

- The world has no choice but to notice
- And see Christ live *in and among* us!
- Food for thought!