

John 13:1-38

John 13:1 **"Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end."** (Or onto the uttermost)

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Chapter 12 marks the end of Jesus' public ministry --- **"These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.**

37: But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:"

From that point on, Jesus turns His attention to His disciples.

Yes, time was short, and there was much to be done.

Certainly, **"Jesus knew that his hour was come,"** but His disciples were blissfully unaware of the true situation.

Jesus had told them about His upcoming crucifixion, but they had refused to listen --- **Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee."**

No, they were still anticipating the kingdom, and even in the upper room, were busily jockeying for the best place.

Luke 22:24-27 **"And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.**

25: And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over

them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.

26: But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

27: For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth."

And this wasn't the first time the subject had come up.

Back in Luke 9:46-48 we read, "Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest.

47: And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him,

48: And said unto them, Whosoever shall

receive this child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great."

Apparently, they hadn't taken Jesus' words to heart.

The old argument had resurfaced once again, robbing them of their last precious moments of fellowship.

Certainly, Jesus hadn't discouraged the idea of leadership.

In fact, He had already promised them the very positions they were now arguing about.

Luke 22:28-30 **"Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. 29: And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;**

30: That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

No doubt the controversy had been driven by pride, but it was also based on a misconception.

They were arguing about a kingdom that had been set aside.

Yes, Jesus had a lot of work to do, and in a very short time.

Oh, they would be leaders all right, but in the church of Jesus Christ.

And they would still require the respect and authority needed to get the job done, but they would be working under an entirely different principle --- **"he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve."**

At the moment, they were ill prepared for such a role.

Not only had they been arguing about promotion, but in the absence of a servant, they had been content to eat the Passover with dirty feet.

Finally, Immanuel (God in the flesh), stooped to do the job nobody else wanted.

John 13:2-5 **"And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;**

3: Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;

4: He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel,

and girded himself.

5: After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded."

Not only was He taking care of their feet,
but He was taking care of their hearts.
Once again, Jesus was using a very familiar
situation to teach an important lesson.

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You see, things were much different in their
day.

First of all, there were no bathtubs in
their homes.

So in order to get really clean, they must
use the services of a public bath.

Then there would be the problem of getting
home.

Cement sidewalks were non-existent, and there was no asphalt on their streets. And besides that, everyone wore sandals. No, there was no escaping the problem of dirty feet, and so it became the duty of a household servant or slave to wash the feet of the family and guests. Apparently, there hadn't been a servant in the upper room, and, obviously, there hadn't been a servant's heart in any of the disciples.

That's when Jesus turned a legitimate need into a useful illustration, and then followed it with an important lesson.

John 13:12-17 **"So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? 13: Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye**

say well; for so I am.

14: If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

15: For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

16: Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

17: If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

Jesus hadn't relinquished His position as teacher and Lord by doing the servant's job.

Actually, that was His point --- **"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one**

another's feet.

**15: For I have given you an example,
that ye should do as I have done to
you."**

It was a lesson that would be sorely needed
in the days ahead, and it is a lesson
that is still sorely needed in the
Church of Jesus Christ.

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So, that was Jesus' lesson, pure and simple,
and I don't wish to detract from His
teaching.

However, I have purposely skipped over
Jesus' conversation with Peter, because
there seems to be something more here
than would first appear.

But let's look at the obvious before we get
into the deeper meaning.

Everyone was embarrassed by the Lord's actions, even though that hadn't been His purpose.

Yes, their Master was doing the job they had conveniently overlooked.

As Jesus worked His way down the line of dirty feet, Peter's face was getting redder and redder, and his ears were beginning to burn.

V 6-8 "--- **Lord, dost thou wash my feet?**

7: Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

8: Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet."

Peter had always been a little hard to handle, but this time he had really overstepped the mark.

Certainly, his motives were right.

He had too much respect for his Lord to
allow Him to do such a menial task.
And being a take-charge kind of guy, he
ended up telling the Lord what he could
and could not do.

Jesus' response was immediate --- **"If I wash
thee not, thou hast no part with me."**

Peter was shocked.

He couldn't bear the thought of severing his
relationship with Jesus --- **"Lord, not
my feet only, but also my hands and my
head."**

Now, he was telling the Lord how it should
be done!

*Peter, stick your foot out, and stop putting
it in your mouth!*

V 10 **"Jesus saith to him, He that is washed
needeth not save to wash his feet, but
is clean every whit: and ye are clean,**

but not all.

11: For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean."

Certainly, Jesus' remark was not unusual. Everyone knew it was only necessary to wash your feet upon returning from the public bath.

However, Jesus' other remark, that is ---

"If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me," does seem a little unusual.

Some people have seen a hidden meaning here.

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When Jesus became "**sin for us, who knew no sin,**" we were "**made the righteousness of God in him.**"

Now, you can't have a better righteousness placed on your account than Christ's righteousness.

Also in John 5:24, Jesus says, "--- **He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.**"

So salvation is both instant and permanent. When we accept Jesus as our Saviour, we have inherited Christ's perfect righteousness, and we have literally **"passed from death unto life."**

In other words, **"He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit:"** (or entirely clean).

However, just like the person who has returned from the public bath, we must deal with the problem of dirty feet.

Because we have a sinful nature, we are still prone to sin.

Also, we live in a fallen world where temptations abound.

Therefore it is inevitable that the child of God will be defiled by his daily walk. Such sins will not result in the loss of our salvation.

However, if they are not taken care of, they will result in the loss of our fellowship --- **"If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me."**

And not only will our joy be gone, but our usefulness will be gone.

Yes, foot washing is absolutely necessary, and it is absolutely possible.

1 John 1:9 **"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."**

Yes, Jesus is willing to wash our feet.

In fact, He insists upon it --- **"If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me."**

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And then Jesus dropped His first bombshell.

V 18 **"I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me."**

No doubt Jesus was referring to Psalm 41:9, which says --- **"Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me."**

David had been writing about a heartache in his own personal life, but in so doing, he had identified another traitor by the name of *Judas*.

You might have noticed that Jesus only quoted the last part of David's

prophecy --- **"He that eateth bread with
me hath lifted up his heel against me."**

That's because the first part didn't apply
to Him.

Unlike David, who had been completely taken
in by his false friend, Jesus knew
exactly what Judas was doing.

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How deceiving sin is!

Judas had witnessed the resurrection of
Lazarus, a miracle that could only have
been accomplished by God, and yet he
thought he could pull the wool over
Jesus' eyes.

He got his first rude awakening when Jesus
said --- **"He that eateth bread with me
hath lifted up his heel against me."**

And then Jesus continued.

V 19-21, "Now I tell you before it come,
that, when it is come to pass, ye may
believe that I am he.

20: Verily, verily, I say unto you, He
that receiveth whomsoever I send
receiveth me; and he that receiveth me
receiveth him that sent me.

21: When Jesus had thus said, he was
troubled in spirit, and testified, and
said, Verily, verily, I say unto you,
that one of you shall betray me."

The longer Jesus talked, the more
uncomfortable Judas became.

His whole plan had been based on deception.

He was certain Jesus trusted him.

And he had used that trust to siphon off
money from the kitty, but it had not
been enough to satisfy him.

One of the benefits of being in the inner circle was the opportunity to study Jesus.

For instance, Judas knew Jesus liked to use the quiet solitude of the Garden of Gethsemane for prayer.

He could turn that kind of information into cash --- **"What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you?"**

Yes, he was strategically positioned to betray Jesus in the absence of the populace.

And his plan worked perfectly!

Then, why did he become so upset when Jesus was arrested and condemned?

Wasn't that the plan?

Why did he go to the chief priests and elders in deep sorrow, crying out ---

**"I have sinned in that I have betrayed
the innocent blood."**

And why did he finally hang himself?

Was it the awful beatings and the crown of
thorns that finally brought him to his
senses, or was there something else?

Is it possible that this deceiver had been
deceived by the great deceiver?

We may never know!

But we must consider the possibility that
Judas would have been fully aware of
Jesus' supernatural ability to simply
walk away from danger.

So, maybe he thought, and, of course, this
is only a maybe, maybe he thought he
could have his cake and eat it too.

And then something went terribly wrong.

Jesus *allowed* Himself to be arrested!

Certainly He did!

He could have called "**twelve legions of angels?**

54: But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?"

So, had Judas really planned to destroy Jesus, or was he simply using Him to make a profit?

Either way, it would have been good with that man "**if he had not been born.**"

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However, nothing went wrong with Satan's plan.

He had what he wanted, and Judas could go hang!

He had gotten his ear by using the old reliable bait of money.

Yes, --- "**he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.**"

Then, he had his heart --- **"the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him."**

And, finally, he had all of him --- **"And after the sop Satan entered into him."**

Yes, little by little, and Satan is a cruel master.

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V 21-22 **"When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.**

22: Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake."

Suddenly the room was filled with tension. Everyone was looking out of the corner of his eye.

Was it Matthew?

He had been one of those crooked tax
collectors before he met Jesus.

Or maybe it was James or John?

They had always been hungry for power.

Even their mother had tried to wrangle the
best places in the kingdom for them.

And then there was Peter.

No one questioned Peter's honesty, but he
always had that nasty habit of trying
to run everything.

Judas?

No, not Judas!

Jesus trusted him.

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Peter had always been a very resourceful
fellow, and in those few moments of
suspense, he noticed something.

V 23-25 **"Now there was leaning on Jesus'
bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus**

loved. (That would be John)

24: Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake.

25: He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it?"

Although scripture doesn't indicate it, I suspect that at least some of this conversation was whispered.

John was leaning on Jesus chest, so it would be easy for him to whisper in Jesus' ear, "**Lord, who is it?**"

In like manner, Jesus probably spoke quite softly when He said, in V 26, "**He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it.**"

John rolled his eyes in the traitor's direction, and then Peter knew.

V 27-29 "And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.

28: Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him.

29: For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor."

Even Peter and John, who were in the know, didn't understand Jesus' request.

And some of them assumed Jesus was sending Judas on an errand.

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So, why the secrecy?

If Jesus didn't want the disciples to know who the traitor was, why did He bring the subject up in the first place?

Well, we don't have to guess about that.

Jesus had already answered that question in

V 19 **"Now I tell you before it come,
that, when it is come to pass, ye may
believe that I am he."**

You will notice that the little word "**he**" at

the end of the sentence is in italics.

That means the translators added it for

clarity, but, in actual fact, Jesus

said, "**that, when it is come to pass,**

ye may believe that I am --- "

And "**I am**" is one of the names of Deity.

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When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, He

demonstrated a power that could have

only belonged to God.

This new revelation, that He was fully aware

of Judas's treachery, would serve to

reinforce His deity in the minds of His disciples.

This assurance would be sorely needed in the near future when they saw their Lord hanging in apparent helplessness on the cross --- **"Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he."**

This, of course, leads to a second question. If Jesus knew exactly what was happening, why didn't He identify the traitor? I believe the answer is quite obvious.

Jesus was **"the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,"** so Judas's plan must be allowed to succeed.

Certainly, the disciples needed to know *He* knew who the traitor was, but if they knew, they might try to stop him.

Of course, Peter could have stopped him all
by himself.

However, after that foot-washing incident, I
think he was content to let Jesus call
the shots.

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Yes, Judas was fully committed to his plan,
and he must be allowed to carry it out.
And Satan was fully committed to his plan to
destroy Jesus.

And most importantly, God had a plan to save
our mortal souls from His righteous
judgment.

Jesus was fully committed to that plan.

Yes, Judas must escape, and Jesus must be
betrayed into the hands of sinful men.

V 30 **"He then having received the sop went
immediately out: and it was night."**

Whenever you desert the Son of God, whenever
you forsake the Light of the World, it
will always be night.

Judas had made his choice, and he was
determined to carry it through.

1 Timothy 6:10 **"For the love of money is the
root of all evil: which while some
coveted after, they have erred from the
faith, and pierced themselves through
with many sorrows."**

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And yet V 21 tells us, Jesus --- **"was
troubled in spirit."**

At this point, I don't think it was the
cross that was troubling Him.

That would happen later in the Garden of
Gethsemane.

No, I believe it was Judas.

As that determined man sat at the table, so near and yet so far, Jesus was grieving for the condition of His soul.

I don't believe Judas was ever saved, but he couldn't say he was never loved.

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V 31-32 **"Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. 32: If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him."**

Can you hear the exaltation in Jesus' voice? Judas had gone out, setting in motion the next step in God's plan of salvation. Yes, Jesus was grieved for his soul, but He was fully committed to His Father's plan.

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However, the forces that would now be set in motion would profoundly influence His disciples' lives.

They must be prepared for the events ahead. For 3-1/2 years, they had enjoyed and depended upon His presence.

And at that very moment, they were still eagerly anticipating His kingdom.

Yes, it was time to bring them on board.

V 33 **"Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you."**

It hadn't surprised the disciples when Jesus told those angry Jews --- **"Whither I go, ye cannot come,"** but they were His disciples!

They had planned to spend the rest of their lives with Jesus.

I'm sure Jesus was grieved when He saw the look of consternation on their faces. He would soon be telling them about "**another Comforter,**" but as yet, He could not make that announcement.

But there was another resource, a resource that resided in their own hearts.

V 34-35 "**A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.**

35: By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

They had benefitted greatly from Jesus' love. Now it was time to love one another.

And it wasn't a suggestion. It was a
command --- **"A new commandment I give
unto you."**

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I don't think Peter heard a single word.
His mind was still fixed on the words ---

"Whither I go, ye cannot come."

Yes, Peter was about to jump the traces one
more time.

V 36-38 **"Simon Peter said unto him, Lord,
whither goest thou? Jesus answered him,
Whither I go, thou canst not follow me
now; but thou shalt follow me
afterwards.**

**37: Peter said unto him, Lord, why
cannot I follow thee now? I will lay
down my life for thy sake.**

**38: Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay
down thy life for my sake? Verily,**

verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice."

Peter was a "**now**" kind of guy, and the words "**thou shalt follow me afterwards**" didn't sit well with him.

Certainly, Jesus warned him of the dangers of trusting in his own strength, but his mind was made up.

Again, his motives were right, but he was on the wrong track.

In the end, he would be brought to grief by the words of a mere damsel.

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As we enter next week's lesson, we will find that Jesus has a lot more work to do.