

Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet — John 13:1-20

August 23, 2009

1. John 13-16 are the last words He speaks to His apostles.

Jesus had entered Jerusalem on Sunday, and on Monday had cleansed the temple. Tuesday was a day of conflict as the religious leaders sought to trip Him up and get evidence to arrest Him. These events are recorded in Matthew 21-25. Wednesday was probably a day of rest, but on Thursday He met in the Upper Room with His disciples in order to observe Passover.

2. Jesus is celebrating the Passover meal with His apostles the day before that the nation of Israel will keep the Passover.

(We know that Jesus died at the same time that the Passover lamb was sacrificed. Therefore, he would not be able to keep the Passover with His apostles. Because Jesus is the Lamb of God, He was sacrificed at the same time that Israel was slaying their Passover lamb).

John 13:1 Now before the Feast of the Passover, (Mat 26:17-19; Mark 14:12-16; Luke 22:1-2)

Notes on Passover: (by Swanson, James; Nave, Orville: *New Nave's*. Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, 1994)

- Institution of: Ex. 12:3-49; 23:15-18; 34:18; Lev. 23:4-8; Num. 9:2-5, 13-14; 28:16-25; Deut. 16:1-8; Psa 81:3, 5.
- Design of: Ex. 12:21-28
- Special Passover, for those who were unclean, or on journey, to be held in second month: Num 9:6-12; 2 Chr 30:2-4
- Lamb killed by Levites, for those who were ceremonially unclean: 2 Chr. 30:17; 35:3-11; Ezra 6:20
- Strangers authorized to celebrate: Ex. 12:48-49; Num 9:14
- Observed at place designated by God: Deut. 16:5-7; with unleavened bread, Ex. 12:8; 15-20; 13:3, 6; 23:15; Lev 23:6; Num 9:11; 20:17; Deut 16:3-4; Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7; Acts 12:3; 1 Cor 5:8
- Penalty for neglecting to observe: Num. 9:13
- Reinstituted by Ezekiel: Ezek. 45:21-24
- Observation of, renewed by the Israelites on entering Canaan: Josh. 5:10-11; by Hezekiah, 2 Chr. 30:1; by Josiah, 2 Kin. 23:22-23; 2 Chr. 35:1, 18
- Observation of after return from captivity: Ezra 6:19-20
- Observed by Jesus: Matt. 26:17-20; 22:15; John 2:13, 23
- Jesus in the temple at time of: Luke 2:41-50
- Jesus crucified at time of: Matt. 26:2; Mark 14:1-2; John 18:28
- The lamb of, a type of Christ: 1 Cor. 5:7
- Lord's supper ordained at: Matt. 26:26-28; Mark 14:12-25; Luke 22:7-20
- Christ is called our Passover: 1 Cor. 5:7

3. It is clear that Jesus fully understood what was about to happen.

He freely laid down His life as a sacrifice and not as a martyr.

13:1... Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, (John 10:18; Mat 26:45; Luke 9:51)

4. His hour had come

13:1... Jesus knowing that His hour had come (John 7:6; 7:30; 8:20; 11:9-10; 12:23; 17:1; 17:11; 18:4; Matt 26:45; Luke 9:51; 13:32-33; 22:53)

What was this divinely appointed "hour"? It was the time when He would be glorified through His death, resurrection, and ascension. From the human point of view, it meant suffering; but from the divine point of view, it meant glory.

5. The love of Jesus

13:1... Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

Rom 5:6-10 the love of God:

Rom 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us,

Those for whom Christ died:

6 the helpless,

6 the ungodly,

8 the sinner,

10 those who make themselves his enemy

6. The confidence of Jesus:

Because Jesus knew who He was, where He came from, what He had, and where He was going, He was complete master of the situation.

13:3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God and was going back to God,

The confidence of Jesus comes from knowing

His authority

knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands,

His identity

knowing that He had come forth from God

His destiny

knowing that He going back to God

7. The humility of Jesus

What Jesus knew helped determine what Jesus did (John 13:4-5). The disciples must have been shocked when they saw their Master rise from supper, lay aside His outer garments, wrap a towel around His waist, take a basin of water, and wash their feet. Jewish servants did not wash their masters' feet, though Gentile slaves might do it. It was a menial task, and yet Jesus did it! As a special mark of affection, a host or hostess might wash a guest's feet, but it was not standard operating procedure in most homes.

John 13:4-5 Jesus ... got up from supper, and laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself. Then He poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.

John 13:12 So when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments and reclined at the table again

8. The pride of Peter

John 13:6-9 So He came to Simon Peter. He said to Him, "Lord, do You wash my feet?" Jesus answered and said to him, "What I do you do not realize now, but you will understand hereafter."

Peter said to Him, "Never shall You wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me." Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, then wash not only my feet, but also my hands and my head."

9. We are clean

John 13:8 ... "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."

John 13:10 ... "He who has bathed,"and you are clean, but not all of you."

"He who has bathed," = speaks of salvation,

We were washed and cleansed through the blood of Jesus:

Heb 9:22 And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. (Acts 10:16; 11:9; 1 Cor 6:11; Rev 7:14)

We were washed and cleansed through the Word of God:

John 15:3 " You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

(Eph 5:26; 1 Cor 6:11; Heb 10:22)

10. Our need for cleansing

John 13:10-11 Jesus said to him, "He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." For He knew the one who was betraying Him; for this reason He said, "Not all of you are clean." (1 Cor 5:6-8)

11. Servanthood: the example of Jesus:

John 13:12-17 ...He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him.

During this meal they are having an argument of who is the greatest among them (Luke 22:14-27).

Jesus knew that there was a competitive spirit in the hearts of His disciples. In fact, within a few minutes, the men were disputing over which of them was the greatest (Luke 22:24-30). He gave them an unforgettable lesson in humility, and by His actions rebuked their selfishness and pride. The more you think about this scene, the more profound it becomes. It is certainly an illustration of what Paul wrote years later in Philippians 2:1-16. Peter must have recalled the event when he wrote his first epistle and urged his readers to "be clothed with humility" (1 Peter 5:5).

Gal 5:13-14 For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Rom 13:8-10)

12. Jesus declares that He is God

John 13:13 "You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am .

John 13:19 "From now on I am telling you before it comes to pass, so that when it does occur, you may believe that I am He.

John 8:58... Before Abraham was born, I am."

John 6:35 I am the bread of life;

John 8:12 "I am the Light of the world

John 10:7 I am the door of the sheep.

John 10:11 "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

John 10:36 ...I am the Son of God'?

John 11:25 I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies,

John 14:6 "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

13. When we receive a fellow believer we are receiving Jesus.

John 13:20 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me."

Rom 12:4-5 For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. (Rom 12:4; 1 Cor 10:17; 12:12-14; 12:20; 12:27-28; Eph 1:23; 4:25; 5:23; 5:30; Col 2:19)

14. Jesus knows that Judas has already arranged to betray Him.

Jesus also knew that Judas would betray Him. Judas is mentioned eight times in John's Gospel, more than in any of the other Gospels. Satan had entered into Judas (Luke 22:3), and now he would give him the necessary thought to bring about the arrest and crucifixion of the Son of God. The word translated "put" in John 13:2 literally means "to throw." It reminds us of the fiery darts of the wicked one (Eph. 6:16). Judas was an unbeliever (John 6:64-71), so he did not have a "shield of faith" to use to ward off Satan's attacks.

John 13:2 During supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him,

John 13:10-11 ...and you are clean, but not all of you." For He knew the one who was betraying Him; for this reason He said, "Not all of you are clean."

John 13:18-19 "I do not speak of all of you. I know the ones I have chosen; but it is that the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'He who eats My bread has lifted up his heel against Me.' "From now on I am telling you before it comes to pass, so that when it does occur, you may believe that I am He.

Conclusion: (from Wiersbe, Warren W.: *The Bible Exposition Commentary*)

It is remarkable how the Gospel of John reveals the humility of our Lord even while magnifying His deity: "The Son can do nothing of Himself" (John 5:19, 30). "For I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will" (John 6:38). "My doctrine is not Mine" (John 7:16). "And I seek not Mine own glory" (John 8:50). "The word which ye hear is not Mine" (John 14:24). His ultimate expression of humility was His death on the cross.

Jesus was the Sovereign, yet He took the place of a servant. He had all things in His hands, yet He picked up a towel. He was Lord and Master, yet He served His followers. It has well been said that humility is not thinking meanly of yourself; it is simply not thinking of yourself at all. True humility grows out of our relationship with the Father. If our desire is to know and do the Father's will so that we might glorify His name, then we will experience the joy of following Christ's example and serving others.

We today, just like the disciples that night, desperately need this lesson on humility. The church is filled with a worldly spirit of competition and criticism as believers vie with one another to see who is the greatest. We are growing in knowledge, but not in grace (see 2 Peter 3:18). "Humility is the only soil in which the graces root," wrote Andrew Murray. "The lack of humility is the sufficient explanation of every defect and failure."

Jesus served His disciples because of His humility and because of His love. Contrast John 13:1 with 1:11 and 3:16: Jesus came "unto His own [world], and His own [people] received him not." "For God so loved the world." In the Upper Room, Jesus ministered in love to His own disciples, and they received Him and what He had to say. The Greek text says, "He loved them to the uttermost."