

UPPER ROOM ADULT BIBLE STUDY  
"The Gospel of John"  
Pastor Jim Otte  
2019-2020

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Lesson 51: John 12:13-13:20 "A Servant's Heart..."

13 Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

- a. "Jesus knew" – John has, all through his gospel, repeated Jesus' knowing that His mission was to suffer, die, and rise again. John notes that here, as a way of stressing how close the end really was.
- b. "He loved them to the end." – Jesus' ultimate love was to suffer and die for everyone, even for those who rejected Him. *Romans 8:39* *nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

<sup>2</sup> During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, <sup>3</sup> Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, <sup>4</sup> rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. <sup>5</sup> Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. <sup>6</sup> He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" <sup>7</sup> Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand."

- a. "when the devil had already put it into the heart..." – John attributes Satan as the instigator of Judas' betrayal. The word "already" tells you that the plan was in place, as Judas had already conspired with the authorities – even as he sat down to eat with them. His betrayal included their fellowship!
- b. "that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going back to God" – Jesus' trust was based on His knowing who He was; whose He was; how His Father felt about Him; His Father's presence in His life. In other words,

*"You are My Son,  
Whom I love.  
With You  
I AM  
Well Pleased."*

When you know who you are, and whose you are, and how He feels about you, you also know WHERE you're headed. That gives you the courage you need to do the hard things in life: stand for your faith; witness to others; risk rejection!



- a. **"What I am doing you do not understand...afterward"** – At the time God acts, we react to the impact: positively or negatively! Later, with perspective, we can see more clearly how God works!

<sup>8</sup> Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me." <sup>9</sup> Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" <sup>10</sup> Jesus said to him, "The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet,<sup>[a]</sup> but is completely clean. And you<sup>[b]</sup> are clean, but not every one of you." <sup>11</sup> For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, "Not all of you are clean."

- a. **"Peter...You shall never wash my feet."** – Peter is appalled that Jesus would lower Himself to do, not only the work of a slave, but a female slave at that!
- b. **"If I do not wash you, you have no share with me."** – Jesus links His service to them, to their eventual service to other people. In essence, Jesus is saying, "If you are not willing to lower yourself to serve, even in the most menial ways, then you are not with me."
- c. **"you are clean, but not every one of you. For He knew who"** – Jesus plays on the word "clean" in reference to physical and spiritual cleansing, i.e. faith. This suggests that Judas, by this time, had given up his faith in Jesus.

<sup>12</sup> When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you?" <sup>13</sup> You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. <sup>14</sup> If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. <sup>15</sup> For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. <sup>16</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant<sup>[c]</sup> is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. <sup>17</sup> If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

- a. **"and resumed His place"** – Jesus had been sitting at the head of the table, as would have been His rightful place at the table.
- b. **"If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to.."** – the message was clear to them: greatness is tied to serving; serving flows out of humility; and humility is an exercise in faith!
- c. **"For I have given you an example"** – the example, which Jesus set, was not only in WHAT He did, but in HOW He did it. He...
  - a. Noticed what had not yet been done: foot washing.
  - b. Saw no one come forward to do it, among His disciples.
  - c. Took it upon Himself to do the task
  - d. He didn't call attention to His work
  - e. He didn't guilt-trip His disciples into doing it
  - f. He gave Peter a choice
  - g. He used it to teach them AFTER He finished.
- d. **"a servant is not greater than his master"** – the contrast: servant/master
- e. **"nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him"** – the contrast: messenger/one sending him
- f. **"If you know...blessed are you if you do"** – the blessings are tied to the doing, not merely the knowing!



<sup>8</sup> I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen. But the Scripture will be fulfilled,<sup>[a]</sup> 'He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.' <sup>19</sup> I am telling you this now, before it takes place, that when it does take place you may believe that I am he.

- a. "I know whom I have chosen" – Jesus emphasizes Judas' betrayal as one whom Jesus had chosen.
- b. "He who ate My bread..." – Judas' treachery cuts deeply. Quoting **Psalm 41:9**. *Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me.*
- c. "when it does take place you may believe" – Ever the Comforter, Jesus tells His disciples that everything which happens is part of God's plan. Nothing will happen, which is outside of God's pre-ordained plan of salvation.

<sup>20</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever receives the one I send receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me."

- a. "whoever receives...receives Me...the One who sent Me." – a final assurance, before everything speeds up and feels very out-of-control. Stay faithful; trust in Me; you are in God's hands!