

Lighthouse Bible Church

February 16th, 2014

John 13: 1 – 17

Scripture Reading: Romans 8: 31 - 39

‘The Love and Humility of Christ’

Stand – Read – Pray

You remember that Jesus was telling the people in the crowd that if they would believe in Him as the light of the world they would not walk in spiritual darkness. And although He had done so many signs and miracles and taught them God’s word, they still did not believe in Him as the Messiah, the One who can give everlasting life.

They continued to rejected Him and in their rejection and unbelief was a fulfillment of what the prophet Isaiah said would happen to those who harden their hearts in unbelief. We saw that because they would not believe that they could not believe because God blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts because of their own hardened hearts of unbelief.

We saw that there is coming a day when God will remove his grace and because of the hardness of a heart of unbelief, they **WILL NOT** be able to believe and they will be judged in the last day.

From this point on until His arrest and death, He is talking to His disciples only because as Verse 36 said, He has hid Himself from them, meaning the people who rejected Him, the majority of the nation of Israel. So now we have an intimate setting of just the disciples in the upper room with Jesus at supper time and what Jesus is about to do is show His incredible love for His disciples and the humility of His heart with which He expresses this love.

Many of us know the love chapter in the Bible; 1st Corinthians 13: 4 – 8. In that passage love is described, in part, as patient, kind, not boastful and does not seek its own. We see that incredible kind of love and humility displayed by our Lord to His disciples in this passage here today.

As a matter of fact over the next several chapters of the book of John we are going to see the love and compassion and care and concern that Jesus has for those who did receive Him and believe in Him.

And the amazing thing about this is that we will see over and over again that He is more concerned with His disciples than He is with Himself. He is the One that is about to be arrested, beaten, crucified and die and yet He is loving and caring for His disciples.

Also, if you think about it, He could be very prideful in Himself thinking that He is about to die for the sins of the world, He is about to be exalted to the right hand of the Father and at His name every knee will bow because He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords and He will be glorified, but instead, He does one of the most incredible acts of humility, as the God of the universe, in that He washes the disciples feet. But that is the character of love, isn't it, it is selfless and serves others.

The physical act of foot washing that was reserved for the lowest of people, the lowest slave of all the household, Jesus does. Listen, if Jesus is willing to humble Himself and do the most menial task, it is a good reminder to us as well. Well, John starts out in Chapter 13 verse one.

Verse 1: Now before the Feast of Passover ...

Remember, the Feast of Passover was originally started to commemorate God delivering the nation of Israel, under Moses, from the Egyptians. The Passover meal started in **Exodus 12: 1 – 13** *go over briefly*

But now with Jesus pending death, He changes the meaning of the Passover in **Luke 22: 19 - 20** and other places, from their release from bondage in Egypt as God passed over their house with blood of the lamb on the doorpost, to their release from their bondage of sin by Him giving His body and shedding His blood on the cross for their sins. That is why we call it the celebration of the Lord's table and not the celebration of Passover.

One other comment about the Passover without going into too much detail; the Passover that Jesus and His disciples celebrated they celebrated on Thursday evening. There was another Passover celebration meal that was on Friday evening as well. The Galileans celebrated it on one day and the Judeans celebrated it on another.

The most important reason for this was so that Jesus could celebrated the final Passover and change the meaning of it and at the same time be the Passover Lamb being slain at the time the Passover lambs were killed. *Explain*

The rest of Verse One says His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father. Again, He knows His hour has come to give His life a for the sins of the world and He knows that beyond His death will be His resurrection and ascension back to the Father in heaven. He is in control of every event that is taking place.

Then it says, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. That word loved is *agapao* the agape kind of love, the strongest kind of love possible and that is how Jesus loved His own and still loves His own today.

It says He loved them to the end which is one word in the Greek, *telos*, which means perfectly, utterly, to the uttermost or fully. That is the love that Christ has for His own. Even though He knows He is about to die a cruel torturous death He is still preoccupied with His love for His disciples to the end.

And by the way, what can ever separate you from that kind of love of God that is in Christ Jesus according to what was read in **Romans 8: 35 – 39**. Nothing!

Also, because His love is immeasurable for others, it did not stop here at the meal. He loved His disciples enough to allow them to be scattered and not arrested with Him, even though one of them cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest. He loved Mary enough that even though His life's blood is flowing from His body, He arranges for her care by giving her to John. He loved the thief on the cross enough to bring Him to paradise that day. His love is utterly, endlessly immeasurable absolute and only absolute humility can generate that kind of love.

You say who would ever reject that kind of love; and we see the answer in

Verse 2: and supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Isacriot, Simon's son, to betray Him.

Some of your versions may say 'during supper' or 'while supper was going on' which is probably the better rendering of this verse. The supper is still going on when we get a glimpse into the deceitful, hatred in the heart of the one who would betray Jesus and how it is in stark contrast to the love of Christ.

We see, in part, the reason for Judas' betrayal of Jesus. It is because the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas to do so.

Remember back in John 6: 70 Jesus said remember I have chosen you 12 and one of you is a devil. As we have seen before, Judas lived in the light of

God's love and revelation of Himself through Jesus and heard the very words of God in human form and yet he rejected Christ. Just like some people do today. They hear the word of God, they know the Christ of the Bible and yet in their heart they hate Him, are indifferent to Him and are far from Him.

In this case, the more Judas hated Jesus the more Jesus loved Him. Think about what Jesus is about to do for all of His disciples, including Judas; He is going to do the most humbling act imaginable by washing his feet. Jesus meets the anger and hatred of Judas with the immeasurable love of God.

But after all, isn't that what Jesus preached back in **Matthew 5: 43 – 44** **you have heard that it was said 'you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy' but I say to you 'love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.**

The devil had influenced Judas to betray Jesus but Judas is fully responsible for his own actions. We got a little glimpse of him back in chapter 12 where we see he had a heart of unbelief and deceit and hypocrisy and hatred and wanted Jesus dead, just like Satan did, and tried to hide it under the guise of religion and following Christ. Not so different than some people today.

The interesting thing is; what drew the rest of the disciples to Jesus, His words and His love, pushed Judas further and further away because of the greed, hypocrisy, deceit and unbelief in his heart. Then look at Verse 3.

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

Jesus is about to perform a most humbling task that is meant for the lowest of the lowest slaves to perform to show His love and humility. So John just puts this

verse in here to exalt Christ. Jesus was given all things by the Father, Jesus had come from God, Jesus was going to God; what more could you ask for or have than all of that? You can't be exalted any higher than having all things and being with God. So before Jesus humbles Himself John wants to exalt Him.

Just like the contrast between the love of Christ in Verse 1 and the hatred of Judas in verse 2, so we see the contrast in the exaltation of Christ in Verse 3 which makes His humility in verses 4 and following all the more real. From being God in heaven to taking on the form of a man and washing sinful men's feet, shows the incredible love and humility of the creator of the universe. So let's look at it starting in Verse 4.

Before we do, let me give you a little background first. They were having this meal in an upper room in the city of Jerusalem. They had to walk there, probably from Bethany, on dirty muddy roads. Typically when you arrived at someone's home there was a slave that would meet you at the door where there was a large pot of water that he would get a rag wet with and wash your feet.

The problem is, in this upper room there is no slave there and so now someone is going to have to wash the dirty feet of everyone. No one volunteers to do it; as a matter of fact the disciples, according to **Luke 22: 24 are disputing among themselves as to which one of them should be considered the greatest**. So if you are thinking about yourself that way, you certainly are not going to demean yourself and humble yourself to do such a menial task reserved for the lowest of slaves....right?

Verses 4 – 5: Jesus rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself and after that He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples feet and wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.

Jesus, after listening in silence, to their bantering and arguing about who is the greatest, gets up and notice what He does. He laid aside His garments. He took

off His cloak and belt and tunic and was standing there dressed like a slave and begins to do what a slave would do, He begins to wash the disciples feet.

Can you imagine the pain and sorry they would have felt at that very moment in time as their conscience is convicted by their own pride and selfishness as the Messiah, Son of God kneels down before them and washes their dirty filthy feet, that they were too proud to do. They missed the opportunity and blessing of washing the feet of the Savior of the world because of their own pride.

This was, among other things, a lesson in humility for them. Did they get the lesson on humility? You bet they did. That is why John wrote this in here. **Peter would write later in 1st Peter 5: 5 – 6 be clothed with humility, God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. James would write in James 4: 6, 10 that God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble so humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and He will lift you up.**

Let me ask you this? What do you think happened the next time they walked into a house with dirty feet and there was no slave around? This is a profound lesson for us today on the need for putting aside our pride and prestige and position and being willing to humble ourselves in our service to one another. Well, Jesus arrives at the feet of Peter and look what happens in Verses 6 - 9.

Verses 6 – 9: READ

Peter, probably in humiliation and guilt asks the Lord are you washing my feet. Why are you doing this? This is beneath you. You are the Messiah, the one who will be bringing in the kingdom, you are the King of Israel. For the leader to wash the feet of a subordinate was unheard of in any of the culture of the time.

So Jesus answers him in verse 7. What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this'. Jesus says that only after My death and

subsequent resurrection will you understand what I am doing now. I came in humility to serve in humility and die in humility, not as a king. Jesus had told them in **Matthew 20: 28** that the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give His life a ransom for many. *It was hard for a Jew to accept Messiah as humiliated, so Jesus teaches and prepares them for ultimate humiliation in His death on the cross.*

So Peter says to Jesus in Verse 8 you shall never wash my feet. As a matter of fact the word ‘never’ is a strong negative meaning ‘you shall never ever not ever’. Doesn’t that sound like something Peter would say.. Remember when Jesus said back in **Matthew 16: 21** that He was going to Jerusalem to suffer many things and be killed and be raised the 3rd day. Peter told Him in **Verse 22** far be it from You Lord this shall not happen to You. Peter had a way of saying the wrong things but certainly with a right desire in his heart.

Since Peter is calling Jesus Lord and not wanting Him to wash his feet because He is his Lord, you would think that this is a praiseworthy act of worship of Peter’s behalf, but it is not because what does the scripture say 1st Samuel 15: 22 says has the Lord a great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice. Obedience is better than worship, always.

So Jesus says to him at the end of Verse 8 if I do not wash you, you have not part with Me. He begins to reveal the spiritual truth behind His act of love and humility and it is spiritual cleansing that only Christ can give and if you do not receive that spiritual cleansing, symbolized by His physical cleansing, you have not part with Jesus. Many times in scripture physical cleansing represented spiritual cleansing

It is only through Jesus Christ that anyone can have their sins cleansed, right?

Revelation 1: 5 says to Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood. 1st John 1: 7 says ... the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin. So look at Peter's response in Verse 9.

Verse 9: Simon Peter said to Him 'Lord, no my feet only, but also my hands and my head'. First Peter says emphatically that You will never wash my feet and now he says 'give me a bath'. Sounds like Peter, right, going from one extreme to the other. I'm not sure if Peter got the fullness of what Jesus was saying but he says 'I want it all'.

Verse 10: Jesus said to him 'he who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean and you are clean but not all of you.

Jesus says, in the physical sense, if you have taken a bath you don't need to take another bath every time your feet get dirty, you only need to wash your feet. Someone would start the day by bathing and cleaning themselves then they may go to several different houses that day. They don't need to take a bath every time they go to someone's home, they just need to wash their feet because the rest of them is still clean.

In the spiritual sense Jesus is saying 'when you are spiritually cleansed at salvation you don't need to be cleansed again, once you are saved, you are saved and it does not need to be repeated. But you still need the daily cleansing for the sins you commit by confessing your sins. **1st John 1: 9**. So there is the one time salvation and the ongoing cleansing and sanctifying work in our lives.

That is why Jesus says in Verse 10 that you are completely clean. What He is saying to them and to us is that, in Christ, you are cleansed from all your sin, past, present and future, and yet because you still sin, you need the daily cleansing that confession and repentance offers.

This is a biblical doctrine you need to understand in relation to the security of your salvation in Jesus Christ. When you became a born again believer in Jesus Christ God removed all of your sins from you **Psalm 103: 10 – 12** says. **The blood of Jesus Christ cleansed you from all sin 1st John 1: 7** said.

Because of that, positionally, God sees you as perfect and holy and without sin as He sees His own Son Jesus because you are in Christ and have received Christ's righteousness. **Colossians 1: 22** says **that we are presented as holy, blameless and above reproach in His sight. Jude 1: 24 says that we are faultless before His throne; in our position, in our standing before God.**

Practically, however, we still sin and we need that daily cleansing as we walk through the world and get the dust of the world on us we need to wash our feet daily through confession of sin. Then Jesus says at the end of Verse 10 and 11.

Verse 11: You are clean but not all of you. for He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said 'you are not all clean'.

Jesus says, out loud in the disciples hearing, that you are not all clean. Jesus knew who would betray Him, He has known all along. That is why He said in **John 6: 70** **did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil.**

But He says this I think for a couple of reasons. Number one, so when it does happen, that He is betrayed because one of them is not clean, they will know that God is still in control of His plan and was using Judas to accomplish it. Peter will understand this and refer to it later in choosing a new disciple to replace Judas in **Acts 1: 15 – 17**

Number two, He is giving Judas one last chance to turn away from his hard heart of anger and unbelief toward Jesus.

Only He and Judas knew who the unclean betrayer will be so for Judas to hear that would either convict his conscience to not do what he planned to do and draw him to Jesus, especially after experiencing His incredible act of humility in washing Judas' feet, or it would push him further away in rejection. Then Jesus applies what He has just done in the washing of their feet by asking them a question in verse 12.

Verse 12: so when He had washed their feet, taken His garments and sat down again, He said to them, 'do you know what I have done to you?' He says do you understand what I have done to you, not said, but done. He is teaching them the truth about the importance of humility. In the middle of their arguing about who is the greatest, Jesus says you are the greatest when you are serving with humility. He wants to teach them how to love and serve one another in humility so He says in Verse 13.

Verse 13 – 15 you call Me Teacher and Lord and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you.

Jesus says 'I have just given you an example of true love and humility by doing what no Lord or Teacher would ever do with their students or disciples or followers'. He says 'I, as your Teacher and Lord, took on the role of the lowest of low slaves to serve you because I love you, can you do any less for each other?'

There are a lot of 'one another's' in scripture and this is one of them. And like the other 'one another's' of scripture they are done to one another with a heart motive of love and humility. Jesus is saying 'humbly serve one another out of love' and by the way He will say later in this **chapter 13: 34 – 35** 'a new commandment I give to you that you love one another as I have loved you that you love one another by this all will know you are My disciples if you have love one for another. Then Jesus says in Verses 16 – 17.

Verses 16 – 17: most assuredly I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

They understand the slave master relationship; that is what the word servant is, it is *doulos* a slave. And a slave, they know, is not greater than his master. If the master is willing to humble himself and do a menial task, then they should be willing to also.

Then He says 'if you know these things, blessed are you if you do them'. If you know that you are to serve from a heart of love that expresses itself in humble service of washing someone's feet or doing any menial task, and you do it, then you are blessed by God.

"If you continue to do as I have done," in showing humility in the most abject kind of service to each other, you're going to be happy, blessed. Happy is the one who learns how to show humble love, who is willing to bow down to the ground and serve another believer...Happy are you when you walk in this kind of humility, happy are you when you condescend in that kind of love, happy are you when you're willing to do that menial duty for the sake of another, happy are you when you don't care about exalting yourself to the predominance of every situation, happy are you when you humble yourself."

You want to know something, blessing always flows out of obedience, doesn't it? No matter what we are called to do as long as we are willing to follow the example of Christ from a heart of love and humility in serving one another; that will be the greatest example that an unbelieving world will see and know that we are followers of Christ.

Gospel here.

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Introduction and Review:

1st Corinthians 13: 4 – 8

Verse 1:

Exodus 12: 1 – 13, Luke 22: 19 – 20
Romans 8: 35 – 39

Verse 2:

John 6: 70, Matthew 5: 43 – 44

Verses 3 - 5:

Luke 22: 24, 1st Peter 5: 5 – 6, James 4: 6, 10

Verses 6 – 9:

Matthew 20: 28, Matthew 16: 21 – 22
1st Samuel 15: 22, Revelation 1: 5, 1st John 1: 7

Verse 10:

1st John 1: 9, Psalm 103: 10 – 12, Jude 1: 24
Colossians 1: 22

Verse 11:

John 6: 70, Acts 1: 15 – 17

Verses 12 – 17:

John 13: 34 – 35

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John 13: 34 – 35