

A person wearing a white, flowing robe is walking on water. The scene is set at sunset or sunrise, with a bright sun low on the horizon, creating a golden glow and reflecting off the water's surface. The person's feet are visible, splashing water as they walk. The overall mood is serene and miraculous.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

PART THIRTY-EIGHT

The Word of Made Flesh



JOHN 13:31-38

1. Jesus proclaims that the Son of Man is glorified, after Judas leaves (v.31)

a. This assures us that this was a part of God's divine plan

b. He speaks of it (glorification) as accomplished before Judas has secured betrayal



c. The message for us is that God has a place for the wicked people (devils) in your life

i. The truth is that God may not extract every wicked person from your life, and you shouldn't ask him to



ii. Some people in your life see it as their business to oppose you, or make your job harder, and God allows them to stay because they are the ones who keep you on your knees

iii. And in what God is doing, He has plans to lift you up more than what you could on your own or without devils in your life, but more importantly, to glorify Himself



Lessons from Judas

1. Judas was not an isolated example, though he will forever be attached to Jesus' betrayal; his failure remains with us

2. Judas represents a common experience of modern Christianity of those for whom the Gospel has become a stumbling block (1 Cor 1:23)



a. The Greek term (σκάνδαλον) can literally refer to a device for catching something, such as a trap

b. But better, in this context, refers to that which causes offense or revulsion and results in opposition, disapproval, or hostility (BDAG)



c. Simply stated, whether initially or eventually, those who follow in Judas' footsteps become weary of the Gospel

i. They see the message as something that limits them or holds them back from being their true self--
read, I know me better than God knows me, so he should just back off and let me live my life



ii. They disapprove of the complete message and feel that it has some parts they can work with, but reject the totality of the message--this is how Christian cults develop

iii. These belief systems all get the cross wrong



iv. They like the idea of being transformed one day, but don't agree that Christ is the only one to accomplish it

v. They love the rules, discipline and rigidity, but don't believe it requires a divine Father sacrificing his Son, to what some liberal scholars call divine child abuse



vi. Truthfully, you don't need Christ to accomplish what falsified versions of Christianity want and claim--you can accomplish it without him

(1) You don't need Christ for polygamy

(2) You don't need Christ to accomplish social elitism



(3) You don't need Christ to be intentionally prejudiced

(4) But he is often invoked with the hopes of adding validity to a failed proposition

(5) Thusly, if I don't need him for what I am trying to accomplish, that makes my effort Christless (by definition) and therefore un-Christian by default



3. Judas does not represent the disbelief among those who are outside the faith, but the disbelief of those who are among the faithful

a. Because of this, he is far more of a threat than someone like the Jewish leaders or even Pilate. These you can see coming, and you know where they stand.



b. But the story of Judas is scary because he's already on the inside-- doing Christian things, saying Christian words, and singing Christian songs

c. Hebrews 3:14- "*For we have become partners with Christ, if in fact we hold our initial confidence firm until the end.*"



2. The New Commandment (vv.34-35)

a. Jesus is emphatic about the newness he expresses, as these two terms (Εντολήν καινήν) are pushed to the front of the sentence, though they would normally be receiving the action of the verb (give)

b. Jesus has already initiated this new commandment by washing the disciples' feet



c. The newness of the commandment comes with the condition he places on the love of the disciples--they are to love one another **JUST AS Jesus has loved them**



i. This means that this new love will not be sourced in the disciples' casual and circumstantial feelings for one another, but in the deep sacrificial love Jesus has shown them and will ultimately demonstrate for them on the cross.



ii. "This new love is not an independent love, for all Christian love is a subset of and founded upon the love of God himself, but this love is a response to the love of Jesus"--Edward Klink, III



iii. Because Jesus has loved me, I can now love my fellow brothers in a unique way that was not available to me before

iv. Jesus says, this is what the world wants to see--because it's something they can't do, nor do they have a register for it--worldly love is ultimately limited



3. Living for Jesus is Harder than Dying for Him (vv.36-38)

a. Jesus tells Peter that he cannot follow him right now, but he will be able to later

i. Peter says, why not--I am willing to die for you



b. Jesus responds with a question and a strong rebuke

i. The irony is evident in the fact that the reason Peter cannot follow Jesus at this time is that He is the one who actually has to give his life for Peter and the world.



c. Peter's Boldness

i. I don't think Peter has an issue with fighting for Jesus (later, he will cut off Malchus' ear in what would seem like a losing battle; Judas shows up with at least 600 Roman soldiers)



ii. But what Peter struggles with in his denials is standing up for Jesus amid disappointment and shattered expectations



iii. I think the principle for us is understanding that the cost of discipleship requires the constant grind and grunt work of living for Jesus through the highs and lows of our journey, which proves to be more difficult than a one-time decision of giving one's life on His behalf; however noble it may be--many have given their lives for much less.

