

John 13

Good morning and thank you for joining us. Would you please turn in your bibles to John 13?

We'll be participating in communion this morning.

Last week we saw at the end of chapter 12 how Jesus once again predicted His death, as He spoke of the authority that came to Him from God the Father.

This morning we begin a very special section of scripture, because chapters 13-17 are unique to John's gospel, and all take place in the setting of 1 night. The other gospels don't give the details of what we see in these chapters.

This morning we're going to take a deep dive as we study the implications of the scene as Jesus washes His apostles' feet. We'll study verses 1-17, and the title of our message this morning is LOVE ON DISPLAY

Let's read verses 1-9 and then we'll pray

Chapter 13 opens up with the beginning of the night that Jesus was betrayed. We're studying a short period of the life of Christ, but this is such an important period, that John devotes almost one quarter of his gospel to this fateful night.

In our text this morning the scene is really dominated by 3 T's- the table, the towel, and the traitor.

Remember at this point, Jesus' public ministry is over. He is no longer teaching the masses. What we see now is His private ministry with His disciples.

1 Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the

Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. The idea behind the phrase to the end is “to the fullest extent, to the uttermost.”

This verse becomes more powerful when we think of how the disciples will repeatedly fail Jesus this very night.

Luke tells us after the Passover dinner **Luke 22:24 Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest.**

After they leave the upper room and go to the garden of gethsemane, Peter James, and John sleep rather than stand with Jesus in prayer. **Luke 22: 45 When He rose up from prayer, and had come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow. 46 Then He said to them, “Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation.”**

Judas will then betray Jesus with a kiss, and Peter will deny the Lord three times.

After all the disciples forsake Jesus and flee at His arrest, then read these words at the end of verse 1 again, **"He loved them to the end."**

Jesus was forsaken by the very people He came to save, and not only that, they were His closest friends!

Despite the personal hurt He endured, Jesus loved them to the end. The bible describes God’s agape love in **1 Corinthians 13:4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; 6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.**

God's people fail, but His love for us never fails. Only God has a love that never quits, even in the face of betrayal and rejection. This is the love with which Jesus loved His disciples during this last week, and it's the love with which He loves us every week.

Story??

Our failures don't dilute or divert His love for us. Jesus still loves His disciples "to the end."

2 And supper being ended,[fn] the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, we will spend time next week looking at Judas, and the lessons for us as we study his fall as an apostle.

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 fully aware of his Lordship. He's fully cognizant of His authority, and of His power.

In our world today it's pretty common for people to demand better treatment by saying "Do you know who I am?"

Jesus knew His greatness more than anyone, and yet He gave better treatment to others instead of expecting it Himself. Remember this is Jesus-God in the flesh-look how the Bible describes Jesus in **Colossians 3:15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. 18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.**

And with all power coursing through His veins, what does Jesus do?

4 rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. **SHOW PIC 1** If you've seen the famous painting of the last supper from Leonardo DaVinci, historians will tell you that it's not accurate. They weren't at a singularly long table.

CLOSE PIC 1

SHOW PIC 2 The common dining table of the day was called the triclinium. This was a low (coffee-table height), U-shaped table. Because the table was low, they didn't sit on chairs. They leaned on pillows, propped up on their left arm, and their head would be toward the food. It was very intimate, and they'd be relaxing as they ate. **CLOSE PIC 2**

Why would they do such a thing?

You've likely been to a restaurant where you eat so much you say I just wanna lay down. You ever get the meat sweats?

Let's read verse 4 one more time

4 rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. Here Jesus laid aside His garments. The next day Jesus would do the same thing again, for the same purpose of serving others. **Matthew 27:35 Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots,[fn] that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet:**

"They divided My garments among them,

And for My clothing they cast lots."[fn]

5 After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. Have you ever noticed that not only did Jesus wash their

feet, but He also did all the prep work for it? He grabbed the towel, He grabbed the basin and He filled it with water.

Now this scene was probably much more awkward than we might think. Jerusalem streets were dusty and dirty. When you entered a house, it was a common courtesy to get your feet washed.

But washing feet was a degrading job - only the lowest servants were to perform the task of foot washing.

In fact, it was against rabbinical law to force a Jew to wash feet.

Clearly none of the apostles were interested in washing each other's feet. Oh, I'm sure they would've gladly washed Jesus' feet.

But they couldn't wash Jesus' feet without having to be available to wash the others' feet, and that would have been an admission of inferiority among their fellow competitors in the hierarchy of their mind.

So no one's feet got washed.

So again, picture the scene. There would be an awkward silence as Jesus, their Lord and Master, begins to wash their feet.

Everyone is embarrassed. Great uncomfortableness at the table. How many of them were thinking 'why didn't I do that?', or 'I shoulda done it', or 'why didn't anyone else?'

Let's read all of verses 3-5 together

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, 4 rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. 5 After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. For 3 years Jesus hung with this same group of men. Jesus saw the same dozen or so faces around the

table, around the campfire, around the clock. This crew rode in the same boats, walked the same roads, and visited the same houses.

Do you ever marvel at how Jesus stayed so devoted to these men? Not only did He have to put up with their visible shortcomings, Jesus also endured the apostles' invisible faults.

Think about it for a moment.

Jesus could hear their unspoken thoughts. He knew their private doubts. Not only that, He knew their future doubts.

What if you knew every mistake your loved ones had ever made and every mistake they would ever make? What if you knew every thought they would have about you, every irritation, every dislike, every betrayal? Would you be able to love them?

Jesus loved Peter, knowing Peter would one day deny and curse Him. Jesus trusted Thomas with authority, knowing that Thomas would one day doubt the reality of the resurrection.

You get the point-the apostles list of shortcomings is overwhelming-and that's just the ones we know about!

This morning I want you to picture yourself on the scene of John 13, you're in the upper room watching this shocking drama unfold before your very eyes.

It's been a long day for Jesus and the apostles. Jerusalem is packed with Passover guests, most of whom have clamored for a glimpse of Jesus. The spring sun is warm, the streets are dry and dusty, and the disciples are all a long way from home. A splash of cool water would be refreshing.

The disciples enter the upper room one by one, and take their places around the table. On the wall hangs a towel and on the floor sits a pitcher of water and a basin.

Anyone of the disciples could volunteer for the job, but nobody does.

After some time, Jesus stands and removes His outer garment. He wraps a servant's girdle around His waist, takes up a basin, and kneels before one of the disciples. Jesus unlaces a sandal and gently lifts the foot and places it in the basin, covers it with water, and begins to bathe it.

1 by 1, one grimy foot after another, Jesus washes all of the apostles' feet.

How is it possible that the One who created the universe is the one with His hands with the towel and basin of water?

Hands that shaped the stars, hands that the next day will be pierced and nailed to the cross at calvary, now wash away dirt.

Fingers that formed the mountains now scrub in between toes.

And the One whom all nations will one day bow, He kneels before His disciples.

Jesus will shortly be arrested in gethsemane, and the same feet He just washed will run away into the dark night as they abandon Him.

I looked for a bible translation that reads Jesus washed all the disciples' feet except for Judas, but I couldn't find one.

Picture the scene as Jesus silently lifts the feet of his betrayer and washes them in the basin! In just a few minutes Judas will leave the room to receive his ransom of 30 pieces of silver for betraying Jesus to the religious authorities.

Jesus knows what these men are about to do. He knows they are about to perform the vilest act of their lives. By morning the

apostles will bury their heads in shame and look down at their feet in disgust.

And look back at verse 1-HE LOVED THEM TO THE END.

Truly this is love on display.

6 Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, “Lord, are You washing my feet?” Most of the disciples remained silent as Jesus washed their feet, but you can almost sense Peter’s emotions bubbling up until he couldn’t take it anymore, and finally he objects to Jesus’ lavish act.

7 Jesus answered and said to him, “What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this.” This entire scene is much more than just foot washing. Jesus assures Peter that the significance of this would become clear in time

8 Peter said to Him, “You shall never wash my feet!” pause here. Never is a dangerous word isn’t it? Especially when we’re talking to God.

At first glance, Peter appears humble, as if to say ‘oh lord I should be washing your feet instead’. But this wasn’t Peter’s meaning. This was self-assertive pride that refuses to accept grace from another person.

This is the kind of pride that will not be vulnerable in front of others.

Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.” Peter needed to accept this washing from Jesus. And in doing so, we see what’s needed from us. If we don’t accept the cleansing of Jesus that He offers, we have no part with Him.

Remember Peter preached the good news of the kingdom and cast out demons in Jesus’ name – and he still needed his feet washed.

Peter saw the incredible scene on the mount of transfiguration with Moses and Elijah, an amazing spiritual experience – and he still needed his feet washed.

Peter's own feet walked on the water in an amazing act of faith – and still needed his feet washed

This foot washing was a powerful lesson in humility and serving, but it was more than that. It also shows that Jesus has no fellowship, no deep connection with those who have not been cleansed by Him.

9 Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!” Notice Peter still is trying to direct Jesus- He's telling Jesus what to do instead of allowing Jesus to do what He wanted to do.

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.” When a person came to a social event, he would take a bath at the public bathhouse. Then he'd walk to the destination in his laced-up sandals. By the time he arrived his feet were dirty - but only his feet. The person didn't need another bath, all they needed was the street dust to be washed away.

And this is the case for a Christian. Come to Jesus and you get an internal bath. The blood of Jesus cleanses you of all your sin - past, present, future. In Christ, our inner man is clean, but outwardly we still have to walk through this wicked world, and we can pick up street dust. Our attitudes, habits, and life get affected negatively by this sinful world in which we reside currently.

But as Christians, we don't need another bath - our inner man has been washed once and for all in the blood of Jesus. What we need are regular foot-washings, where we knock off the influences of this world that are clinging to us.

Lets read verses 10 and 11

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
11 For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, “You are not all clean.” He’s speaking of Judas Iscariot, and we’ll study Judas in-depth next week.

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? I wonder how long Jesus paused. Did he look each bewildered disciple in the eye?

13 You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am.
14 If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. Noticed the order is switched-Jesus refers to Himself as Lord first and teacher.

What does this mean-I don’t know!

But notice His command here....

15 For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. 16 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. What a remarkable example Jesus gives us of !

Some Christian groups take Jesus' example of foot washing literally. They believe Jesus gave His church three ordinances to practice: baptism, communion, and foot-washing.

Most churches however maintain only baptism and communion are to be observed by the church.

Here's the 3-fold test we use at Calvary Chapel: 1) Was it initiated by Jesus, 2) was it practiced by the early church, and 3) was it taught in the NT letters?"

Baptism and communion pass all three tests. Foot washing fails on the last two.

But even though foot-washing was never meant to be ritualized, Jesus instructs that it should be actualized.

As His followers, we are to emulate, and imitate, and act like Him. Which means serving one another in lowliness of heart and mind, seeking to build one another up in humility and love.

We'll end our study in verse 17...

17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. Jesus promises God's favor on those who practice humble service, not for those who simply realize that they should be humble.

Knowing what we ought to do, and actually doing it, are two different things. **James 1:22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.**

Of all the men in the room that night, only one was worthy of having His feet washed, and yet He was the one washing feet! The One worthy of being served was serving others.

Too often when we think about humility, we think of it in terms of words. But humility isn't just seen in our words, but in our conduct.

Simply put, humility is a behavior, and Jesus is our example.

Notice Jesus didn't rise from the table and boldly announce "I'm now going to demonstrate humility."

He simply stooped down in a sign of complete humility and condescension and began washing feet.

Jesus has a lot to say about serving others.

Mark 9:35 And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all."

AND

Matthew 20 25 But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. 26 Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. 27 And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave— 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

When Peter wrote to Christians about humility, he said 1 Peter 5:5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for

"God resists the proud,

But gives grace to the humble." [fn]

Tragically today many Christians are known more for their pride than they are for their humility. And if we're not careful, we can be just like the apostles and allow the basin of water to sit idly by while the world is watching.

Praise God that what Jesus did for the apostles 2,000 years ago He has done for us. He has cleansed us from sin! Isaiah 1:18 Come now, and let us reason together,"

Says the LORD,

"Though your sins are like scarlet,

They shall be as white as snow;

Though they are red like crimson,

They shall be as wool.

More than that, He is still cleansing us! Jesus still washes away filth! **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.**

Our Savior gazes upon the darkest acts of our lives. But rather than recoil in horror, or give us condemning words, Jesus reaches out in kindness and from the basin of His grace, He scoops a palm full of mercy and washes away our sin.

But that's not all He does. Because He lives in us, you and I can do the same to others.

Because Jesus has forgiven us, we can forgive others.

Because Jesus has humbly served us, we can humbly serve others.

But to display a heart like Jesus means we have to be willing to kneel as Jesus knelt, touching the grimy parts of the people we're around.

Yet you know as well as I do that it's much easier to criticize those with dirty feet instead of humbly washing them.

Praise God we have Jesus as our example of humility, of love on display. **Philippians 2 5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.**

This morning we're going to celebrate communion together.

Luke 23

19 And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

And

20 Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you."