

The Upper Room

John 13: 1-11

The events which we've read in the text take place on the last evening our Lord will spend prior to His death. Later that night he will be arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane; very early in the morning He will be falsely accused and tried of the Sanhedrin. They will lead Him to stand before Pilate, where He will be condemned to death, scourged, and crucified. In less than twenty four hours from this moment in time, Jesus will have given His life for the sin of the world.

A twenty four hour period may seem a short amount of time, but a lot can happen in a day. I have often thought of the last hours our Lord spent, leading up to the cross. Fortunately the Bible records much detail concerning those final hours. In the coming weeks I want to examine the passages that deal with the time between the Upper Room and the Borrowed Tomb. As we begin our journey, I want to examine the [details](#) of this gracious encounter with the disciples within: [The Upper Room](#).

I. The Wisdom of Jesus (1-3) – This was a stressful time for the Lord and His disciples, but Jesus was well aware of the circumstances and what lay ahead for Him. Notice:

A. He Knew the Time (1) – [Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.](#) Jesus was well aware that the hour of His crucifixion was fast approaching. He had faced threats before, but His hour had not yet come. Now He sits among the disciples, looking toward the cross. He knew the suffering He would endure and the sacrifice He must make. He knew the disciples would be scattered, alone, afraid, confused, and doubtful.

- On the eve of His death, Jesus is found giving comfort to those He loved. He didn't forsake them in their hour of need. Knowing what Jesus knew, most would've been trying to enjoy the last of life's pleasures, but Jesus is concerned with the disciples. He knew the time and their need.
- He is aware of our time today as well. He knows we are in difficult days and desires to provide comfort for our souls. He will never forsake us!

B. He Knew the Traitor (2) – [And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;](#) Among the twelve was one that looked like the others. He had walked with them, ate with them, witnessed the miracles, heard the Word, endured the storms, and even carried the purse.

- By all accounts, one might think that Judas held a more prominent position than some of the others. He appeared to be devoted and honest; he carried the money, but inwardly, he was filled with greed, contempt, and wickedness. Judas had lived among the Christ, Savior of the world, but had never accepted Him as his personal Savior. Jesus was well aware of the heart of Judas. He knew he would betray Him.
- Friend Jesus sees more than the outward appearance; He sees the heart. [John 10:14 – I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.](#) Jesus knows those who are His! He is aware of the condition of the heart. We may deceive others, but not God. How was this possible for Judas? How do folks come to church for years and never accept Christ?

C. He Knew the Truth (3) – [Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;](#) There has never been a greater injustice than the crucifixion of Christ. He was holy, sinless, the Son of God, and yet He was condemned to die, a Man without any guilt or shame! A vile, convicted murderer was released and Jesus was crucified.

- This was the greatest injustice ever committed, but it wasn't in vain. This was God's plan; that is why Jesus came. He was born to die for our transgressions. Jesus knew that He was sinless; He knew He had done nothing worthy of death. He also knew this was the Father's will. He left the splendor of heaven, came robed in flesh to purchase our redemption. Jesus knew by submitting to the cross, He was fulfilling His Father's will. Jesus was aware of why He came. Isn't it amazing that He came at all, knowing what was in store?

II. The Work of Jesus (4-5) – Here we find a beautiful expression of our Lord's love for those who follow Him; He washes their feet! Most today perform this for show, as an act of humility, but it is often done with pride. This wasn't the motive of Jesus. We discover that it was:

A. An Act of Humility (4) – [He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.](#) Foot washing was the work of slaves. A Jewish servant wasn't required to perform this demeaning task; it was left for the Gentile slaves, (Illus Jesus' performance).

- He teaches a profound lesson in humility. Can you imagine the thoughts of the disciples? They see the Christ, their Master, the Bread of life, the Resurrection, the King of glory bowing to wash their feet! What a lesson in humility.

B. An Act of Consistency (5) – After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. Jesus washed all their feet! It might not have been difficult to wash John's, the disciple whom Jesus loved. What about Peter? Jesus knew he would deny Him. What about Thomas? Jesus knew he would doubt Him. What about Judas? Jesus knew he would betray Him for 30 pieces of silver! Knowing all that, we see a humble Servant, washing all their feet; not a one is left out.

- Jesus came as a Sacrifice for all. He was consistent with His work. Jesus doesn't see folks as we do. He doesn't see a worthless addict, an abusive spouse, or a convicted felon; he sees a soul in need of salvation. Our labor for the Lord must be consistent, without prejudice or favor!

C. An Act of Deity – Jesus was the Son of God, their MASTER, but He was the only One worthy to wash their feet. You see, this wasn't about physical cleanliness; this was pertaining to a spiritual need.

- The twelve didn't have the authority to cleanse themselves or anyone else. That work is reserved for the Lord. We can't force people to change; we can't save them. Jesus alone has that power. Salvation isn't about pleasing men, but obedience to the Lord. Our work is to point them to Jesus; He will clean them up! [John 12:32](#) – And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. John said, "He must increase, but I must decrease." If we will lift up the Lord, others will see, and He will save!

III. The Witness of Jesus (8-11) – The disciples were only thinking in physical terms. Jesus had to explain what He was doing by washing their feet. In fact, they received far more than just clean feet! He reveals eternal truth by His simple act of humility.

A. He Reveals Salvation (10) – Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. There are two different words translated wash in our text. The word washed is translated from the Greek word *louo*, meaning to bathe all over, a complete cleansing. The word wash is *nipto*, meaning to wash a part of, as the hands, feet, or face. Jesus says we must first be completely cleansed in Him if we are to be saved.

- Many today seem to want to only clean up certain areas of their lives, but we must be washed in the cleansing flow of Jesus! It is impossible to receive salvation apart from Jesus. Clean feet are no good if the heart is still dirty. Salvation comes from a complete surrender!

B. He Reveals Submission (8, 10) – Once we have been washed, we must continue to wash. Jesus reveals to Peter that we must be clean to have fellowship with the Lord, [V.8 – Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.](#)

- Jesus isn't saying that we must be saved again, but that we must keep our lives clean of sin. When we were saved, we were cleansed, but with time, sin enters our lives and we get dirty again. The only way to have communion with Jesus is to keep our sin confessed.
- He has purchased us with His precious blood. I am no longer my own. I don't have the right to continue in sin. The feet easily got dirty in Jesus' day. They had to be washed daily. We too must confess our sins daily before the Lord. [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.](#) A life that honors Christ must be a clean life.

C. He Reveals Security (10) – [He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit:](#) Once we have been washed in Jesus, we are clean [every whit](#). We are totally and eternally clean.

- There will be times that we must confess sin, but the penalty for our sin has been taken care of. We are secure in Christ. The saved won't have to stand before a holy God responsible for sin. Jesus forever atoned for our sin at Calvary. I will never need to come for another cleansing. Jesus washed all my sin away. I stand righteous before the Father.

D. He Reveals Separation (11) – [For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.](#) Jesus spoke of Judas. He had his feet washed, but his heart was still dirty.

- Many today are trusting in the works they do, or their church membership, but that doesn't provide cleansing. Judas could've been saved if he had only believed. Just being in the presence of Jesus didn't secure salvation. There must be a time in your life when you came to Jesus for cleansing from your sin. Otherwise, you are not clean. Don't be as Judas and never trust Jesus with your heart. Your eternity depends on it.

Conclusion: There is much in these verses of Scripture. We serve One who is well aware of our lives. He wants us to be victorious in Him. He has given us a great example in service, if we'll only follow Him.

The greatest truth is revealed concerning the spiritual condition. Jesus used a physical example to teach an eternal truth. We must be washed in the blood if we are to be saved. There is no other way! Have you been washed in the blood?