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By Dan Maines

## John 13

### John 13:1

Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus, knowing that His hour had come that He would depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

† This verse introduces the Upper Room discourse. Jesus' love for His disciples was faithful, enduring even to betrayal and death.

## **John 13:2**

And during supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him.

† The betrayal originated in Satan's influence but was carried out through Judas' willing heart.

## **John 13:3-5**

Jesus, knowing that the Father had handed all things over to Him, and that He had come forth from God and was going back to God, got up from supper and laid His outer garments aside; and He took a towel and tied it around Himself. Then He poured water into the basin, and began washing the disciples' feet, and wiping them with the towel which He had tied around Himself.

† The One who possessed all authority humbled Himself in the lowest servant's task. This act foreshadowed the cross, the ultimate act of humility and cleansing.

† Philo (On the Special Laws 1.163) describes foot washing as the duty of slaves, highlighting the radical humility of Jesus.

## **John 13:6-9**

So He came to Simon Peter. He said to Him, "Lord, You are washing my feet?" Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing, you do not realize right now, but you will understand later." Peter said to Him, "Never shall You wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no place with Me." Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, then wash not only my feet, but also my hands and my head."

† Peter resisted, misunderstanding the symbolic act. Jesus revealed that cleansing by Him was essential for fellowship.

## **John 13:10-11**

Jesus said to him, "He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet; otherwise he is completely clean. And you are clean—but not all of you." For He knew the one who was betraying Him; it

was for this reason that He said, "Not all of you are clean."

† Judas' betrayal excluded him from the cleansing of Christ. Outward association with Jesus was not the same as inward transformation.

### **John 13:12-15**

Then, when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments and reclined at the table again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done for you? You call Me 'Teacher' and 'Lord'; and you are correct, for so I am. So if I, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I gave you an example, so that you also would do just as I did for you."

† Jesus established a model of servant leadership. Greatness in His kingdom is expressed in humility.

† The Mishnah (Kiddushin 1.1) stresses the honor due to teachers, making Christ's humility all the more striking.

### **John 13:16-17**

"Truly, truly I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them."

† Knowledge must lead to practice. True blessing lies in serving others.

### **John 13:18-19**

"I am not speaking about all of you; I know the ones whom I have chosen; but this is happening so that the Scripture may be fulfilled: 'He who eats My bread has lifted up his heel against Me.' From now on I am telling you before it happens, so that when it does happen, you may believe that I am."

† Jesus quoted Psalm 41:9, foretelling betrayal. Even treachery fulfilled God's plan, confirming His identity.

## **John 13:20**

"Truly, truly I say to you, the one who receives anyone I send receives Me; and the one who receives Me receives Him who sent Me."

† Union with Christ extends to His messengers. To reject them is to reject Him.

## **John 13:21-22**

When Jesus had said these things, He became troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "Truly, truly I say to you that one of you will betray Me." The disciples began looking at one another, at a loss to know of which one He was speaking.

† Jesus' distress revealed His humanity. The disciples' uncertainty showed that Judas concealed his betrayal well.

## **John 13:23-25**

Lying back on Jesus' chest was one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. So Simon Peter nodded to this disciple, and said to him, "Tell us who it is of whom He is speaking." He then simply leaned back on Jesus' chest and said to Him, "Lord, who is it?"

† The beloved disciple (John) shared intimate closeness with Jesus, contrasting Judas' hidden treachery.

## **John 13:26-27**

Jesus then answered, "That man is the one for whom I shall dip the piece of bread and give it to him." So when He had dipped the piece of bread, He took and gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. After this, Satan then entered him. Therefore Jesus said to him, "What you are doing, do it quickly."

† Judas' reception of bread symbolized false fellowship. Satan's possession marked the depth of his betrayal.

### **John 13:28-30**

Now none of those reclining at the table knew for what purpose He had said this to him. For some were assuming, since Judas kept the money box, that Jesus was saying to him, "Buy the things we need for the feast"; or that he was to give something to the poor. So after receiving the piece of bread, he left immediately; and it was night.

† "It was night" symbolized spiritual darkness. Judas left the Light to walk in the darkness.

### **John 13:31-32**

Therefore when he had left, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him; if God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and will glorify Him immediately."

† Betrayal set in motion the events that would glorify both Son and Father through the cross.

### **John 13:33-35**

"Little children, I am still with you a little longer. You will look for Me; and just as I said to the Jews, now I also say to you: 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all people will know that you are My disciples: if you have love for one another."

† The new commandment was not love in general but love patterned after His sacrificial example. Love became the mark of true discipleship.

† Ignatius of Antioch stressed this unity of love as the evidence of the church's authenticity.

### **John 13:36-38**

Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus

answered, "Where I go, you cannot follow Me now; but you will follow later." Peter said to Him, "Lord, why can I not follow You right now? I will lay down my life for You!" Jesus replied, "Will you lay down your life for Me? Truly, truly I say to you, a rooster will not crow until you deny Me three times."

† Peter's zeal was sincere but overconfident. Jesus foretold his denial, showing human weakness apart from grace.

## **How it applies to us today**

† True greatness is shown in humble service.

† Outward association with Christ does not equal inward faith, as seen with Judas.

† Love is the true badge of discipleship, more than words or rituals.

† Human zeal without dependence on Christ leads to failure, as with Peter.

**† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †**

## **Source Index**

† Philo, On the Special Laws 1.163 – foot washing as a slave's task

† Mishnah, Kiddushin 1.1 – honor due to teachers

† Psalm 41:9 – prophecy of betrayal

† Ignatius of Antioch – command of love and unity as the church's mark

† Chrysostom, Homilies on John – Christ's humility in washing feet

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