

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript

The Betrayer John 13:18-22

Part One

I know that we are in the Gospel of John, but I would like us to begin this weekend's message by reading something that the Apostle Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians 9:24-27**. And this is what he wrote. **"Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. (25) And everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. (26) Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; (27) but I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified."** It certainly is very clear from what Paul wrote that he did not take his salvation for granted simply because he had made a profession of faith. And it is also clear that he does not want any of the Corinthians to take their salvation for granted either.

But why would he do this? I want to make it very clear to you that Paul did not do this because he was afraid he or the Corinthians could lose their salvation. This of course would be impossible, but self-deception certainly is not. People can very easily be self-deceived and this certainly is true when it comes to people thinking that they are the disciples of Christ when the truth is they never were.

And this brings us to our study of **John 13**. We have just concluded John's account of the foot washing, which we for the purpose of our study broke into three different parts.

The first part that we considered was the love of Christ exemplified (John 13:1-6).

How was Christ's love exemplified? Christ's love was exemplified by the fact that, even though it was only a matter of hours before He would be betrayed and crucified, He took the time to wash His disciples feet. Jesus in doing this was symbolically communicating to His disciples what He was about to do. And what was He symbolically communicating? He was symbolically communicating in the foot washing that in a few short hours He would, on their behalf, be washing away the guilt of their sin in the blood of His cross. This was the first part of John's account. So, what was the second part?

The second part of John's account of the foot washing was the love of Christ explained (John 13:6-11).

In this particular part of John's account we saw how Peter resisted Christ's attempt to wash his feet. He resisted because he did not understand what Christ was seeking to communicate in the foot washing. All Peter saw in the foot washing was his Messiah doing something that was more fitting for a slave. And that became a stumbling block for Peter.

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So in light of this, it is not surprising that Peter resisted Christ by saying, "**Never shall you wash my feet!**" This outburst on the part of Peter prompted Jesus to explain the symbolism of the foot washing using symbolic terms in **John 13:8**. Did Christ's explanation using symbolic terms suddenly make the symbolism of the foot washing any clearer? No, It didn't. Peter totally misunderstood the symbolism of the explanation. This led Peter to mistakenly believe that if he did not literally allow Jesus to wash his feet then he, meaning Peter, would not participate with Christ in His future kingdom.

The prospect of not participating in Christ's kingdom, of course, was very upsetting to Peter, so he responds to Christ, "**Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.**"

This misguided response by Peter brought us to the third part of John's account of the foot washing. The third part of John's account of the foot washing was the love of Christ exhorted (John 13:12-17).

Though Peter and the rest of the disciples were still clueless about what Jesus was seeking to communicate to them when He washed their feet, it did not prevent Christ from exhorting the disciples to serve one another in the same selfless way as He had served them in **John 13:14**.

So, in light of this exhortation, would there be a benefit to them if they, in fact, heeded it? Absolutely. Jesus made this clear to His disciples in **John 13:17**. Let me read for you what Jesus said to them in this verse. He said, "**If you know these things** [or in other words if you know what I want you to do in respect to serving others, then], **you are blessed if you do them.**" So, how would the disciples be blessed if they heeded Christ's exhortation?

Those disciples of Christ who heeded His exhortation in John 13:14 would be blessed with the assurance that they were truly His disciples.

How important would this assurance be? How important would this knowledge be to a disciple of Christ? There should be nothing more important for a disciple of Christ than knowing that they are, in fact, a disciple and therefore a recipient of the gift of life.

As Christ's disciples listened to this pronouncement of blessing I would imagine that this pronouncement by in large was well received except perhaps with one exception. And of course we know who that one exception would have been. It would have been Judas. We are now ready to consider the next segment that John details for us in our study of **John 13**. A segment that flows quite naturally from John's account of the foot washing and Christ's pronouncement of blessing upon those disciples who would, in fact, heed His exhortation. And what is this next segment that John details for us?

John, against the backdrop of the love of Christ exemplified, explained and exhorted details for us how Christ very systematically exposed His self-serving betrayer in John 13:18-30. We will now break this passage, as we did the earlier passage, into three different parts. So, what is the first part that we will consider this weekend?

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The first part that we will consider is the betrayer predicted (John 13:18-22). Let me read this section of verses for you. **"I do not speak of all of you. I know the ones I have chosen; but it is that the Scripture may be fulfilled, "He who eats My bread has lifted up his heel against Me." (19) From now on I am telling you before it comes to pass, so that when it does occur, you may believe that I am He. (20) Truly, truly I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.' (21) When Jesus had said this, He became troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, that one of you will betray Me.' (22) The disciples began looking at one another, at a loss to know of which one He was speaking."**

Based on these verses it is quite clear that Jesus, on the last night of His life, did, in fact, predict His betrayal. But lest we be confused we should not think that this was the first time that He, in fact, had done this. He had also predicted His betrayal earlier in His ministry in **John 6:71**. But this time He provided His disciples much more information about His betrayal than He had provided them earlier. So, let us now begin to look at this more extensive prediction.

We will begin by looking at what Jesus said in the very first part of **verse 18**. And what did He say? He said, **"I do not speak of all of you."** What does Jesus mean by this?

When Jesus told His disciples, "I do not speak of all of you" He made it clear that not all of them would experience the blessedness of the assurance that comes through serving others. This would mean that Jesus knew that one of His disciples would have no particular interest in heeding His exhortation. This would mean that Jesus knew that there was one of His disciples, when push came to shove, would be more interested in serving himself rather than serving others. And, of course, we all know who that disciple was. It was Judas who Jesus clearly identifies later in our passage as the person He was talking about.

How could Jesus know this? How could Jesus know that one of His disciples would not enjoy the blessedness of what He spoke of in **John 13:17**?

Let us continue to read **John 13:18**. What did Jesus say? He said, **"I do not speak of all of you, I know the ones I have chosen."**

When Jesus said, "I know the ones I have chosen," He was talking about having an intimate knowledge of the character of those He had originally chosen to be His disciples (John 6:70).

When Jesus chose His disciples, He was not hoping that they would be a certain kind of person. He knew what kind of person they actually were. He was actually able to see the condition of their heart.

And what did Jesus see when He looked at the heart of Judas. We don't have to guess. Let me read for you **John 6:66-70**, which was Christ's earlier prediction of His betrayal. **"As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew, and were not walking with Him anymore. (67) Jesus said therefore to the twelve, 'You do not want to go away also, do you?' (68) Simon Peter answered Him, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life. (69) And we have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy one of God.' (70) Jesus answered them, 'Did I**

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Myself not choose you, the twelve, and yet one of you is a devil?" Or in other words, Jesus was telling His disciples that one of them was at their very core an enemy of God.

Did Jesus know when He chose Judas that Judas was spiritually messed up? Absolutely! Jesus, as **John 13:18** tells us, knew the ones He had chosen. In other words, when He chose His original twelve disciples, He had an intimate knowledge of their character.

This is incredible. This means that throughout the course of His public ministry, when Jesus looked at Judas, He saw a man who at his very core was a devil. He saw a man who at his very core was His enemy. And yet throughout His public ministry, He did not treat Judas any differently than any of His other disciples. He loved and cared for Judas in the very same way as He loved and cared for His other disciples, and He did this even to the very end.

Should this challenge us in respect to how we treat various individuals who are less than friendly or even hostile toward us? Absolutely! How could it not!

But certainly though this is true, it raises an important question. If Jesus did, in fact, know the true condition of the heart of Judas, then why would He have chosen Judas as one of His disciples? In other words, the Scriptures might call us to love our enemies but certainly this does not mean that we have to marry them. So, what is the answer to this question? Why did Jesus, in light of His intimate knowledge of the character of Judas, still choose him to be one of His disciples?

Let us continue to read **John 13:18**. **"I do not speak of all of you. I know the ones I have chosen; but it is that the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'He who eats My bread has lifted up his heel against Me.'"**

The reason why Jesus chose Judas, even though He knew that Judas was a "devil," was in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled (John 13:18). This is why Jesus chose Judas.

The Scripture that Christ quoted that would ultimately be fulfilled by His choice of Judas was Psalm 41:9. So when Psalms 41:9 was written by David, was he writing this verse from the perspective of his own experience or was he writing this verse from the perspective of the experience of the Israel's future Messiah? I believe that he was writing this verse from the perspective of his own experience. In other words, David, in Psalm 41:9, was not specifically speaking of Christ's betrayal by Judas, but rather he was speaking of his betrayal by his close friend Ahithophel (2 Samuel 15:31).

And what was the nature of this betrayal? Ahithophel, a very trusted counselor of David, who obviously had eaten with David, perhaps even regularly, betrayed David when he joined forces with Absalom to remove David from the throne of Israel. This of course was a very painful period for David and Psalm 41:9 is a record of that betrayal. But though David was specifically speaking of the betrayal of Ahithophel in Psalm 41:9, Jesus, in John 13:18, makes it clear David's betrayal by Ahithophel prophetically prefigured His own betrayal.

Therefore in light of the fact that Jesus in **John 13:18** makes it clear that the Scriptural record of the betrayal of David by Ahithophel prefigured His own betrayal, we can conclude that Christ's selection of Judas as one of His disciples was not an accident but was actually purposed in order

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that this Messianic pre-figuring of Christ in the Old Testament Scripture through the betrayal of David by Ahithophel might be fulfilled.

So, why is Jesus telling His disciples all of this? Why was Jesus telling His disciples about this shocking betrayal that had been prophetically prefigured in **Psalms 41:9**?

Let us now go on and read **John 13:19**. "**From now on I am telling you before it comes to pass, so that when it does occur, you may believe that I am He.**"

Jesus, in this verse, tells them why He is now speaking so bluntly about His betrayal. He is speaking bluntly about His betrayal in order that they might believe something about Him when the betrayal actually takes place. And what would that be? Would it be that He was their Messiah? Or that He was their God? Of course not! How could His betrayal when it took place lead them to believe either of these things? Therefore it is neither. Rather it is something else.

Jesus, in John 13:19, was telling His disciples that He was speaking bluntly about His betrayal so that when it happened they might believe that He was, in fact, the one who had told them.

Jesus obviously at this point was attempting to soften the blow of what was about to happen and to give them something that might be able to sustain them as a group while the events of the next few hours were unfolding. And the knowledge that it was Jesus Himself who had told them these things before they actually happened would be very helpful.

But now Jesus moves from ministering to a future need that would be unfolding over the next few hours to a more pressing and present need. He had just told them about His very imminent betrayal, but He wants to assure them that their commission as apostles will remain in force and that the promise regarding their reception among men stands as originally given.

We see this assurance in **John 13:20**. Let me read this verse for you. "**Truly, truly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.**"

When Judas betrayed Christ, he abandoned the mission that Jesus had entrusted to His apostles, but the remaining apostles could be assured that their mission was still in place (John 13:20).

At this point in our text you might think that the disciples would have had some inkling that the betrayal that Jesus had been speaking of would be done by one of them. But this was not true. How do we know this? Let us now read **John 13:21**. "**When Jesus had said this, He became troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, that one of you will betray Me.’"**

Though Jesus had been speaking of His betrayal, it is clear from John 13:21 that Jesus felt it was necessary to help them see that His betrayer would, in fact, be one of them.

And how did they respond to this revelation? Did they immediately point their fingers at Judas? Was it obvious to them who among them would be the traitor? And the answer is what? No! It was not obvious.

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This certainly is clear as we read **John 13:22** isn't it? What does it say? "**The disciples began looking at one another, at a loss to know of which one He was speaking.**"

It is clear from the response of the disciples in John 13:22 that there was nothing in the life of Judas that alerted his fellow disciples that at the core of his being he was an enemy of Christ.

Is this possible that an enemy of Christ can go undetected by the disciples of Christ? Of course! Isn't that what happened here.

Let me ask you another question. Is it possible for a professing disciple of Christ to be an enemy of Christ and not know it? And again the answer would have to be yes. In fact, I would have to think that Judas himself thought that he was, in fact, a devoted disciple, at least up to a certain point in time, otherwise he would never have chosen to leave his family and whatever else he had to leave behind in order to follow Christ all over Palestine.

So, what is our protection against self-deception? Our protection against self-deception when it comes to the assurance of our salvation is the presence of a conscious striving toward conformity to Christ that takes precedent above all else.

In other words, our protection against self-deception when it comes to the assurance of our salvation is running the race that Christ has set before us, to win!

Should we take our salvation for granted simply because we have made a profession of faith? Absolutely not! How can we in light of what happened to Judas.

May God give us the grace each day to make sure that there is nothing more important in our lives than our striving to be more like Him.