



The Dynamic Gospel Study Guide – Book of John

Chapter 13

1 More than a feast was at hand this Passover. Jesus knew in the core of His being that His hour had come. The journey home to His Father was about to begin. As much as He longed for it, He loved His own just as much and was soon to give the full measure of devotion for them.

2 The formal dinner had barely been completed when the evil seed in the heart of Judas burst into full flower. The man was determined to force a showdown by handing Jesus over to the authorities. And forevermore would the name of Judas be a disgrace to the house of his fathers.

3 The strains of this vicious fugue were playing in the heart of Jesus. Everything - good and bad - that could possibly happen to mankind weighed upon Him. The Father was giving it to Him to judge. He now had to choose how to deal with it. Soon He would have to present the results to His Father, face to face.

4 So Jesus rose from the table, removed His cloak and tunic, setting aside the garments of His authority. He picked up the rags of the servant and wrapped them around Himself.

5 The students watched in shock as Jesus picked up the ceremonially unclean wash basin and filled it with water. He carried it to the first of His disciples and knelt to wash his feet, wiping them dry with the towel wrapped around His waist. He continued down the line while the men sat in stunned silence.

6 As Jesus approached Simon Peter, the man couldn't bear it, saying "Master! What on earth are You doing? You're going to cringe at the feet of Your own student, dirtying Yourself?"

7 Jesus answered patiently. "Peter, I know it doesn't make sense right now. But believe Me, this is something you will desperately need to remember later on. You'll understand when it's time."

8 Peter, overwhelmed by the moment, shook his head violently. "No. **NO!** The Master never washes the feet of the student, and You'll never wash mine!" "Peter!" Jesus answered firmly. "If you refuse, then we're through. You'll be on the outside from now on."

9 That shook Peter up. "Lord, I'm sorry. If You want to wash me, then do it all - I'm ready for a shower."

10 Jesus chortled. "Peter, Peter - this isn't a game of one-upsmanship. This is to make you clean according to the Law. Clean feet are enough for the purpose at hand." Jesus finished and looked up at the group. "There, Peter, you're clean. Yet, not all of you are clean or ever will be."

11 Jesus knew full-well who was going to betray Him and called it like it was. Those were words of final judgment - "You are not all clean."

12 Jesus continued this same humbling act of service till each disciple was honored. He dressed and returned to His place at the table, saying “Do you have any inkling what this means - what I've done to you?”

13 “You shout in the streets 'Here comes the Great Teacher and Master!' and that's fine - I **have** come to lead the way.

14 “So if I demonstrate this humble and menial chore - washing your feet - what does it mean? Simply this - follow My example. Literally.

15 “This isn't a suggestion. Show your love for Me by serving each other, even if it's humiliating. If that means scraping the mud from between each other's toes, so be it.

16 “Ponder this and think hard about it: the slave is never greater than his master. Neither is the ambassador ever greater than the king who sends him out.

17 “This is knowledge that can transform you. It will bring you much joy if you put it into practice.

18 “I know I'm not getting through to all of you. I know I'm responsible for whom I choose, and it's to fulfill the scripture that says “the one who shares My table and eats My bread will none-the-less kick Me in the teeth.”

19 “I say it to you now so that when it all seems to fall apart you will know it was no surprise to Me. Even when it doesn't look like it I am still in the driver's seat.

20 “I swear that anyone who welcomes My ambassadors has received Me as well. And more than that, the One who sent Me is honored.”

21 Jesus finished this crucial sermon and sank into great emotional anguish. “Oh, it's come to this,” Jesus said. “Our group is about to be torn apart by betrayal from right here in this room.”

22 The students looked around frantically, fearing for themselves and perplexed whom it might be. Nobody knew what to say.

23 The student closest to Jesus - the one known as 'best friend' - leaned in to support Jesus in His sorrowful state, but he was just as emotional.

24 Simon Peter caught his eye briefly and mouthed to him “Ask who it is!”

25 So this disciple did. “Lord, who is it?”

26 Jesus sighed and said quietly “Just watch who gets this.” Jesus took a piece of bread and dipped it in the vinegar. He looked up squarely at Judas and handed it to him.

27 Judas took this symbol of guilt and ate it. A satanic spirit took over the man, contorting his face. Jesus said urgently “Get on with it, and quickly!”

28 The rest of the group couldn't make heads or tails of that statement. They were supposed to be locked in for the night.

29 Some assumed that because Judas had the cashbox, Jesus had sent him on a last-minute shopping errand, which seemed odd. Others thought that he was off to distribute some alms to the poor.

30 Judas jumped up and stormed out into the night.

31 Once Judas had left, Jesus said clearly “Now is the time for the Son of Man to be lifted up. And all will see how great God is because of it - they will see His glory with their own eyes.

32 “And God will return the honor, exalting Him all the way to the heights of Heaven. All this will happen without delay.

33 “Oh, My dear ones. My time here among you is so short. I know you'll desperately search for Me, hoping to follow. But as I told the religious leaders, “where I'm going you cannot go right now.” It's difficult to hear that but it's the truth.

34 “But one thing before I go. A command. Do this and keep at it: Love each other with the same passion you've seen **Me** love **you**. What you see Me do, do for each other.

35 “Do that and the world won't be able to tell us apart. If you love each other unyieldingly, the mantle will have rightfully passed to you.”

36 Simon Peter spoke up. “Lord, what place could You possibly be going that we cannot follow? We go with You everywhere!” Jesus replied, “Peter! Try and shut it for a moment and really listen. I'm going away - really away. And it's not your time. Someday you will follow, but not now.”

37 Peter continued to argue. “What do You mean? Why can't I? You think we're not brave enough? Lord, I'm not afraid to die for You!”

38 Jesus cocked His head and sighed. “Peter - really? Would you lay down your life without a second thought? Here's the truth of the matter. In the short span of time before the rooster welcomes the sunrise, you'll have already renounced Me three times.”

Explain the Context:

From your reading provide a short answer to the following:

What is the theme of this chapter?	What is the BIG Idea?
What is something that surprised you?	What is this chapter <i>not</i> saying?

Take a moment to consider these questions:

- 1) What reason does Jesus give his disciples for washing their feet?
- 2) What is significant about being “one who has already bathed” yet still needing their feet washed? How can you relate this to your life?
- 3) Consider this: Jesus washed Judas’ feet knowing that Judas would betray him. Write some thoughts on this truth.
- 4) How does Jesus’ example of washing feet spill over into your life? Do you make time to “wash” the feet of those you serve alongside?

- 5) Why do you think Jesus told his disciples that one of them would betray him?

- 6) According to tradition, Judas must have been seated to Jesus left (an honored position). Why do you think Jesus allowed this?

- 7) When Jesus gave the disciples a “new command” how do you think this prepared them for the grief they would soon experience?

- 8) Peter’s tenacity is on full display in Chapter 13. Jesus gently reprimands him at first, and then gets quite blunt in revealing Peter’s impending denial. In what ways (if any) is this reflected in your own life? How have you responded to Jesus gently nudges?

Apply the Scripture

Write the verse that stood out to you while reading [in this translation or your favorite].

How does this verse challenge you? Does it reveal an attribute of God's character?

For further study:

- Genesis 18:4
- Exodus 30:17-21
- James 1:22-25
- Psalms 41:9