

Last week we saw that Jesus wanted to convey a very important final dramatic lesson. His kingdom was not about getting ahead and being served, but about taking the lowest place and serving others in love. The kingdom of God is full of people that take on the nature of the King. During the lesson, Jesus hinted at a problem in their midst. He said, "... you are clean, though not every one of you." John 13:10b (NIV)

Our passage begins by jumping back to the clue that someone in their midst wasn't really on the team. ¹⁸ "I am not referring to all of you; I know those I have chosen. But this is to fulfill the scripture: 'He who shares my bread has lifted up his heel against me.'" Jesus already knew who had cast their lot with Him. He knew those who had chosen Him over their own personal agenda. Even though He knew Judas was going to go his own way for his own purposes, Jesus gave him the seat of honor next to him (presumably to talk with him), washed his feet, handed him a morsel (a sign of honor and relationship), and warned him of the terrible consequences of doing what he was contemplating. (Matthew 26:24) Jesus chooses those who choose Him, but He still gives those who will not choose Him every opportunity to change their mind. Verse 21 tells us that Jesus was troubled at the thought of Judas' refusal to repent. See how Jesus goes after the heart of even those who will betray Him!

The Scripture fulfilled here is from Psalm 41:9. Originally, this was a song about Ahithophel's betrayal of King David. (2Samuel 15:12; 31; 17:23) The Jewish people had come to recognize that the life of David was a foreshadowing of the coming Messiah. Because David was their great king, who not only advanced their worship and the borders of the nation, but who was promised that his heir would reign forever (2Samuel 12:7-16), they believed details of his life would be symbolic of things that the Messiah would experience. They were correct. With that reasoning then, the Psalms were often interpreted to be not only about David, but a type of what the Messiah would encounter. We call them Messianic psalms. Jesus' use of this passage shows that they were on to something. Ahithophel was a type of Judas. He not only joined with the King David's enemy and advised him how to kill David, but when his advice was rejected, he hanged himself. It's amazing how history repeats itself, especially in these prophetic ways.

¹⁹ "I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that I am He. This had to be a direct reference to the prophets. God told of the time when Israel would return to their homeland. (Isaiah 43:10-11) He even named the particular king's name that would send the Jews home. (Isaiah 44:28) God asked if idols can tell what is going to happen. God declared that only He knows the future and that this should convince us to forsake idols and worship Him alone. (Isaiah 44:6-8) In strikingly similar language to verse 19 in our passage, God declared through Ezekiel, ^{24b} "When this happens, you will know that I am the Sovereign LORD." Ezekiel 24:24b (NIV)

God spoke something similar through Isaiah in chapter 43. Let me paraphrase putting it in context with the surrounding verses. "You are my witnesses," God declared, "That I alone know the future. Therefore, know, believe, and understand that I am YHWH and apart from me there is no Savior."

Commented [notes1]: 24 The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born."
Matt 26:24 (NIV)

Commented [notes2]: 9 Even my close friend, whom I trusted, he who shared my bread, has lifted up his heel against me.
Psalms 41:9 (NIV)

Commented [notes3]: 2 Samuel 15:12 (NIV)
12 While Absalom was offering sacrifices, he also sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, to come from Giloh, his hometown. And so the conspiracy gained strength, and Absalom's following kept on increasing.

Commented [notes4]: 2 Samuel 15:31 (NIV)
31 Now David had been told, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." So David prayed, "O LORD, turn Ahithophel's counsel into foolishness."

Commented [notes5]: 2 Samuel 17:23 (NIV)
23 When Ahithophel saw that his advice had not been followed, he saddled his donkey and set out for his house in his hometown. He put his house in order and then hanged himself. So he died and was buried in his father's tomb.

Commented [notes6]: 2 Samuel 7:12-16 (NIV)
12 When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom.
13 He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.
14 I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with the rod of men, with floggings inflicted by me.
15 But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you.
16 Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever."

Commented [notes7]: 10 "You are my witnesses," declares the LORD, "and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me. 11 I, even I, am the LORD, and apart from me there is no savior. Isaiah 43:10-11 (NIV)

Commented [notes8]: 28 who says of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd and will accomplish all that I please; he will say of Jerusalem, "Let it be rebuilt," and of the temple, "Let its foundations be laid."'
Isaiah 44:28 (NIV)

Commented [notes9]: Isaiah 44:6-8 (NIV)
6 "This is what the LORD says-- Israel's King and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty: I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God.
7 Who then is like me? Let him proclaim it. Let him declare and lay out before me what has happened since I established my ancient people, and what is yet to come-- yes, let him foretell what will come. ... [1]

Listen again to what Jesus said. ¹⁹ *"I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that I am He.* Here is another of the "I am" declarations in John. The original text does not have the word "He", just "I am", the equivalent of YHWH! In other words, "When one of you friends betrays me (specifically one who shares my bread – a literal and figurative expression), remember that I told you this would happen. That will help you to be convinced that I am the LORD as in the Ezekiel and Isaiah passages! The LORD and Savior!" No one stakes their whole reputation on a specific prediction unless they are absolutely convinced of what will happen. Jesus was sure. He was convinced through the Holy Spirit revealing the Word of God.

Then to those who He had chosen, who were clean, Jesus said, ²⁰ *I tell you the truth, whoever accepts anyone I send accepts me; and whoever accepts me accepts the one who sent me.*" This is another of Jesus' "Amen, amen" listen up declarations. If someone accepts you, they accept Jesus, which is to accept God. If you are faithfully representing Jesus, their receiving you is receiving God. I count on this verse when I can't get through to a person doctrinally, and yet they are drawn to who I am in Jesus. I claim this verse. They may not agree with what I'm saying yet because of past teachings they cling to, but they are receiving God when they receive me. (Luke 10:16) How important it is to walk in the Spirit!

Jesus may have been encouraging His disciples that even though one of them would fall, their mission was still just as important. We can take that to heart as well. We get discouraged when someone backslides, especially a leader, but we still have this life-giving mission of introducing people to our living Lord. Don't be discouraged.

Then Jesus returned to the topic of betrayal. The disciples were rightfully upset and trying to figure out who it was or what Jesus meant. Simon must have been next to John who was to the right of Jesus. He asked John to ask Jesus who it was. Peter must have thought Jesus would be more inclined to tell John. If Peter knew, Peter might make sure the traitor never talked again. So John leaned back onto Jesus' chest and asked who it was.

We saw before how the disciples lay around a U shaped table propped up with their left arm and eating with the right. Instead of turning over, John leaned back to speak with Jesus. ²⁶ *Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish." Then, dipping the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, son of Simon.* The honored guest would take the spot to the left of the master or host. That would put his mouth right near the ear of the host. The fact that Jesus could hand the morsel to him tells us that Judas was probably in this spot or close to it. The other Gospel writers express this a little differently. One writes, *"the one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me,"* (Matthew 26:23) and another, *"the one whose hand is on the table with mine."* (Luke 22:21) Each version points to the person next to Jesus, the place of honor.

Judas is an honored disciple. He had them all fooled except Jesus. Even after Jesus told John, it doesn't seem anyone could believe it or suspected him. If it looks like a duck, walks like a duck and quacks like a duck may be a good way to identify ducks, but we can't say the same for Christians. We can sing the songs and memorize the

Commented [notes10]: 16 "He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me." Luke 10:16 (NIV)

Commented [notes11]: Matthew 26:23 (NIV) 23 Jesus replied, "The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me.

Commented [notes12]: Luke 22:21 (NIV) 21 But the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table.

Scripture and even tell others about how wonderful Jesus is, and yet be living with our own agenda. God will sort it all out in the end. (Matthew 14:41) We don't have to worry about Judas among us. Just be sure you aren't acting Christian instead of being in a surrendered love relationship with Jesus, submitted to His agenda of glorifying God.

Commented [notes13]: 41 The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. Matt 13:41 (NIV)

27 As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. "What you are about to do, do quickly," Jesus told him... Earlier in the chapter, Satan prompted Judas, which means he dropped something into his mind. Now, that prompt being accepted, and Jesus offering a sign of favor and friendship, Judas opens himself to Satan's agenda. We either end up with the Lord having His way, or Satan having his. Even when we think we are having our own way, we are just deceiving ourselves. The idea of Satan entering a person was also known to be in rabbinic literature and the Qumran scrolls. Judaism correctly believed that two impulses played upon all men, godly and demonic. They believed it was the individual's will that determined the outcome as to which would prevail. I would agree, but would add that everyone is assisted by the grace of God to yield to God's Spirit, though many will choose to reject that grace. Who is prevailing in your life?

I do not believe that a person who is born again can be possessed by Satan or a demon. We are Jesus' sheep and He protects us. (John 6:39) We can invite oppression by evil, but not possession. Judas was not Jesus' sheep.

Commented [notes14]: 39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. John 6:39 (NIV)

The other disciples were so sure it wasn't Judas that they thought he must have been going to get something for the Feast of Unleavened Bread (the *haggiah*) that immediately followed Passover. Some have suggested that surely buying and selling wouldn't be allowed, but permission to do so on this day has actually been found in rabbinical literature. That night the Temple doors stayed open all night. The poor gathered on the steps leading up to the Temple gates to receive alms. It was considered a very godly act to give especially at this time and in this city. Both ideas were quite possible, but the fact that the disciples didn't connect Jesus' statement about betrayal with Judas just shows how well Judas played the disciple role. Only God knows the heart!

Many have been crushed when a religious leader fell. They couldn't believe that a person in their standing could succumb to evil. Sometimes those closest to the top are the ones that are acting for personal glory. We must keep our eyes at the very top, Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 1:22) He alone will never fail!

Commented [notes15]: 22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, Eph 1:22 (NIV)

30 As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night. There are numerous times in the New Testament that mention the betrayal being at night. It suggests the spiritual darkness of the deed. (1Thessalonians 5:7) Darkness and light is a theme throughout the Gospel of John. John is emphasizing how hardhearted and evil the deed was. Judas had just received the offering of friendship, and he chose darkness instead. I believe everyone comes to a similar place of decision where we chose the friendship of Christ, or to join the forces opposed to Him.

Commented [notes16]: 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. 1 Thess 5:7 (NIV)

31 When he was gone, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in him. Now! Not at the ascension some 40 days later, but right now as

Jesus determined to go to the cross. He could have stopped Judas. He could have told Peter and Peter would have stopped Judas. He could have left and gone somewhere besides the Garden of Gethsemane. In telling Judas to do it quickly, the course was set. He was determined to carry out His Father's will. Surrender of our life to the Father brings glory to us and to God. It is then that people see the heart of God. (2Corinthians 2:14) That is truly glorious.

This passage is also reminiscent of an Isaiah passage, 49:3. ³ *He said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will display my splendor."* The Messiah is called the servant in Isaiah's predictions. Jesus was saying He is about to be glorified just as God said He would display His splendor in Israel, the One who prevails with God.

³³ *"My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: Where I am going, you cannot come.* This reminds us of a father's farewell address to His children. He has one wish that He is about to share with them. They will follow Him in death later, but now is their time to go into the world with the message of what they have seen and heard. (Mark 16:15)

³⁴ *"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."* This is Jesus' farewell command. He has already told them that all the Law is fulfilled in loving God and our neighbor as ourselves, but this goes a step further. (Matthew 22:37-40) Jews were known for their kindness and generosity to other Jews. They just didn't care much for the rest of the world. Jesus wasn't saying anything they hadn't heard before. (Leviticus 19:18) Others preached this message of loving their fellow Jews. But Jesus has added something new. Not only were they to love their fellow Jew, but they were to love one another. That broke all the boundaries of prejudice and segregation. On top of that, they were to love *"As I have loved you..."*

How has Jesus loved us? He humbled Himself to leave the halls of heaven and become one of us. He put His own will aside and did only the will of the Father to redeem us. He took our sins and gave us His righteousness. He faced that torturous death and the grave and brought us the victory. But that's not all. He ever lives to intercede for us. (Hebrews 7:25) How can we love like that? He said we must!

It is only in the power of the Holy Spirit, the very life of Jesus in us that we can possibly love anything remotely like *"as I have loved you"*. As I was writing this Karen called for the deaconesses to ask if Mariko and I needed a dinner brought over. That's it! I said we were ok but still got two pots of chicken soup and two loaves of bread. Someone donates their car to a brother in need rather than trade it in. Someone else gives a family in need a coupon for \$75 dollars worth of groceries. Someone donates \$5000 to the benevolent fund. That's it! I ask our leaders if they'll wash feet, and they are excited. I'm seeing it. I know you are Jesus' disciples. By this will all men know! And it's not just with our own, but we reach out to those that aren't a part of us...yet. After all, you are the body of Christ. Would you expect the body to act any differently than the head, Jesus?

Commented [notes17]: 14 But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him.
2 Cor 2:14 (NIV)

Commented [notes18]: 15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."
Mark 16:15 (NIV)

Commented [notes19]: 37 Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."
38 This is the first and greatest commandment.
39 And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'
40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."
Matt 22:37-40 (NIV)

Commented [notes20]: Leviticus 19:18 (NIV)
18 "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.

Commented [notes21]: 25 Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.
Heb 7:25 (NIV)

That is how we know if we are part of the body of Christ. We obey the head. The body moves at the head's direction. (1Corinthians 12:27) Since Jesus is the loving servant of mankind, speaking the truth in love, ministering health and caring concern, showing others how to live in love, shouldn't His body be doing exactly the same thing?

Commented [notes22]: 27 Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. 1 Cor 12:27 (NIV)

The church in America today has such a bad rap because it has so many bad examples of not acting like Jesus. Years ago I said that if we could become a body of people that love one another, we won't be able to keep people away. It's happening. We are learning to love, to put up with each other's music, to give when there's a need, to love those who are different, to reach out to those who make us a little uncomfortable, to step aside and let the ones coming up develop their gifts, to offer to pray for and minister to the hurting.

He's working! Hallelujah! Notice I didn't say, "It's" working. The Holy Spirit isn't an "it". He's a person. Let's just keep letting Him make us stretch beyond our comfort zone to show His love. You want the ultimate plan for church growth? Love one another! Someone ought to write a book called *Jesus' Plan for Church Growth*, a one page book with John 13:34-35 as the whole text!

Our passage ends with Peter boldly declaring he will follow Jesus anywhere, even to death. ³⁸ *Then Jesus answered, "Will you really lay down your life for me? I tell you the truth, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times!* Jesus may have been referring to the sounding of the fourth watch, the 3A.M. trumpet. It was called the cock's crow because it was around the time roosters would begin crowing. He may have been saying before 3A.M. you'll disown me three times.

We recently had David Witt from Spirit of Martyrdom tell us that the word martyr literally means a witness. Christians are martyrs whether we are killed for our faith or live for our faith and die of old age. (Acts 1:8) *Will you live for Jesus? If you'll live for Jesus then you can die for Jesus, even if your death isn't at the hands of some zealot from another faith. Living a life of love requires that you die daily. (1Corinthians 15:31) That money you wanted to go on vacation with may help someone in need.* Ouch! That's a martyr, a witness of Jesus' love. That time you planned to go for a drive and meal out might end up being directed to visit a struggling brother or sister and pray with them. Reach out in love to someone who is wronging or has wronged you, as Jesus did with Judas. That's a martyr because it required your death to your own will and ways and letting the Spirit of God have His. His first fruit is love! (Galatians 5:22) *In the process, people are seeing that you are really a disciple, not just a pretend one like Judas who was in it for self-exaltation.*

Commented [notes23]: But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses (martyrs) in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8 (NIV)

Commented [notes24]: 31 I die every day--I mean that, brothers--just as surely as I glory over you in Christ Jesus our Lord. 1 Cor 15:31 (NIV)

Commented [notes25]: Galatians 5:22 (NIV) 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

The passage today presents us with this contrast of love and selfishness. Jesus is demonstrating love, and demanding that we are to do the same. Judas is walking away to live out his own agenda. What a chasm there is between these two! "As I have loved you" versus "As I had planned to use you." Martyrs that die daily to love like their Savior versus willful rebels who think of nothing but self. God help us be the loving martyrs that Jesus said we MUST be. We will be if we are in Jesus and He is in us!

Isaiah 44:6-8 (NIV)

6 "This is what the LORD says-- Israel's King and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty: I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God.

7 Who then is like me? Let him proclaim it. Let him declare and lay out before me what has happened since I established my ancient people, and what is yet to come-- yes, let him foretell what will come.

8 Do not tremble, do not be afraid. Did I not proclaim this and foretell it long ago? You are my witnesses. Is there any God besides me? No, there is no other Rock; I know not one."