

# THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

## JOHN 13.1-11



**T. M. Moore**

*A Scriptorium Study*

*And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets,*

*He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Luke 24.27*

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The Gospel of John: John 13.1-11  
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## Introduction to *John 13.1-11*

Jesus provides a lesson in the life of faith. Faith involves what we think about, how we feel, and how we respond to thoughts and affections in our relationships with others. As we look at Jesus in the upper room with His disciples, we can learn much about how to keep focused on our calling at His disciples.

Jesus washed His disciples' feet both as an *experience* of being ministered to, and as an *example* of what it means to love others. He will explain this more fully during the remainder of chapter 13.

We may not be called to wash someone's feet, but we are all called to serve. Let's see what we can learn from Jesus about getting our minds and hearts around serving others.

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# 1 The Heart of the Gospel

*Read and meditate on John 13.1.*

John probably wrote his gospel after the other three evangelists had completed theirs, so he felt free to skip the many events they describe following Jesus' triumphant entry to Jerusalem, and he went straight to the heart of his gospel – the discourse in the upper room. We begin this section, chapters 13-17, with a glimpse into the mind of Christ, a glimpse which tells us everything we need to know about what follows, and about what has come before.

*'Before the Passover, when Jesus knew  
His hour had come, when He would go unto  
the Father and depart this world, since He  
had loved His own (who were in the world), so He  
loved them unto the very end.*

- John 13.1

*Reflect*

1. Skip to Thursday. At Jesus' direction, the disciples have arranged to eat the Passover in an upper room. This is where John picks up the action. John wants to make sure we follow his story from this point forward from Jesus' perspective, and not just ours. Otherwise, what happens will not make any sense. What was Jesus focusing on in that upper room? What was it that He "knew"? Why would He be keeping this in mind at this time? Complete this prayer: *Lord, I know You died and rose again, and that You are ascended on high and seated at the right hand of the Father. And I know also that...*

2. The writer of Hebrews applies Jesus' focus to us. Meditate on Hebrews 12.1-3. What was the *joy* Jesus contemplated which allowed Him to *endure* His suffering? How does the writer of Hebrews apply this to us? What promise attends the practice of this discipline? How would you counsel a new believer to "consider Him"? *Help me, Lord, in my time with You, to focus on...*

3. How was it evident that Jesus "loved His own who were in the world"? John will "bookend" this statement with verse 35. What does this suggest about the kind of relationships Christians are to pursue with one another? What can keep us from relating to one another in this way? *Lord, too often I'm only thinking about myself, rather than my brothers and sisters. Show me by Your example, and empower me by Your Spirit to...*

4. Jesus did not fail in His love for those the Father had given Him (Jn. 17.6-8). Explain. Jesus' love was costly. What He was about to undergo, He had previously taught His disciples they must be willing to do as well (cf. Matt. 16.24-27). Why is this an appropriate way of thinking about the kind of love Christians should have for one another? *Today, Lord, if I am to follow You, I must deny myself, take up my cross, and...*

5. In the first 12 chapters of His gospel, John concentrated on establishing Jesus' claim to be the Son of God and Savior of the world. He cited Jesus' teaching and works to convince readers that Jesus was Who He claimed. But we have not read much about love (although it was clearly declared early on as God's motive in sending Jesus to the world, John 3.16). Everything that follows in John's gospel will focus on the love of Jesus, both for God and for the world (represented by His disciples). All the claims about Jesus – all His works and words – come most fully to expression in one primary way: Love. What does it mean to be a follower of Jesus? Can we truly follow Him and not love as He loves? Explain. Bring together into one the prayers you composed for questions 1-4.

*Summary*

“From here the Evangelist passes to the story of the passion. Here also, insofar as is possible, he is careful in saying nothing that has already been related by the other [Evangelists], unless the course of the narrative obliges him [to do so], and it is impossible to construct an accurate order of events without reporting part of the facts already related by his colleagues. When he reports those things done and said by our Lord to his disciples, which we do not find to be mentioned by the others in their books, he wants to show that our Savior did not undergo his passion outside his knowledge and expectation but by his free will. Only when he wanted to did he taste death.... In the same way here, by writing, ‘Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father,’ he means that he knew exactly the time of his passion and everything that would happen to him.” *Theodore of Mopsuestia (350-428 AD)*

We do not truly know Jesus unless we know Him *as* love, *for* love, and *unto* love. Explain.

*Closing Prayer*

I waited patiently for the LORD;  
And He inclined to me,  
And heard my cry.  
He also brought me up out of a horrible pit,  
Out of the miry clay,  
And set my feet upon a rock,  
And established my steps.  
He has put a new song in my mouth—  
Praise to our God;  
Many will see it and fear,  
And will trust in the Lord.  
Blessed *is* that man who makes the LORD his trust,  
And does not respect the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.  
Many, O LORD my God, *are* Your wonderful works  
*Which* You have done;  
And Your thoughts toward us  
Cannot be recounted to You in order;  
*If* I would declare and speak *of them*,  
They are more than can be numbered.  
Sacrifice and offering You did not desire;  
My ears You have opened.  
Burnt offering and sin offering You did not require.  
Then I said, “Behold, I come;  
In the scroll of the book *it is* written of me.  
I delight to do Your will, O my God,  
And Your law is within my heart.”

Psalm 40.1-8

**Psalm 40.1-8** (*Dix: For the Beauty of the Earth*)

I waited patiently for God; He inclined and heard my cry,  
Lifted me up above the sod, set me on a Rock on high!  
New songs in my mouth He gave; may He through me many save.

Blessed are all who trust in You, turning both from lies and pride.  
Countless wonders, Lord, You do, and Your thoughts with us abide.  
Lord, Your worth who can declare? None with You can e'er compare.

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Offrings You do not require – open now my ears, O Lord –  
What from me do You desire? Firm delight to do Your Word.  
Take my life in ev'ry part; write Your Law upon my heart.

## 2 The Fruit of Knowing

Read and meditate on John 13.2-4.

For Jesus, *knowing* was not merely an intellectual task. Knowing was a spur to action.

*<sup>2</sup>So then,  
when supper ended, and the devil in  
the heart of Judas, Simon's son, had set  
the resolution to betray Him, <sup>3</sup>Jesus, yet  
aware that God had put all things into  
His hands, that He had come from God, and to  
Him was returning, <sup>4</sup>rose from supper, laid  
aside His garments, took a towel, and made  
a girdle of it.*

- John 13.2-4

Reflect

1. John continues to outline what was going on in Jesus' mind, what Jesus *knew* as they gathered in that upper room (vv. 1, 3). Summarize what Jesus was thinking about as He rose from the table. Complete this prayer: *Lord, I think sometimes when I say I know You, or know Your Word, that what I really mean is...*

2. We note that Jesus did not share what He was thinking with His disciples. John must have learned this from Him later. What was the effect on Jesus of *knowing* what He knew? Can we say that we know something like Jesus *knew* if it does not affect us similarly? Explain. *Lord, knowing You and Your Word is like seeing a map of where I should go each day, because...*

3. Jesus had previously said that knowing the truth will set a person free (Jn. 8.32). Free from what? From what did knowing the truth set Jesus free in this situation? *Let Your truth set me free today, Lord, from every...*

4. We note the mention of Judas here, which Jesus certainly knew (cf. v. 11). We'll come back to that. Mediate on verse 3. In what sense had "all things" been given to Jesus (cf. Psalm 110.103; Matt. 26.53; 28.18)? So, at the moment He was rising from that table, Jesus *could* have...? *Lord, You have all authority, all power, and the rule over all things. In my life this means...*

5. John makes special mention of Jesus' removing His outer garment. This act in some ways mirrors what we read in Philippians 2.5-11. Explain. What was Jesus signaling to His disciples? Bring together into one prayer the prayers you wrote from questions 1-4.

Summary

"The whole visible world proclaims the goodness of God, but nothing proclaims it so clearly as his coming among us, by which he whose state was divine assumed the condition of a slave. This was not a lowering of his dignity, but rather a manifestation of his love for us. The awesome mystery that takes place today brings us to the consequence of his action. For what is it that takes place today? The Savior washes the feet of his disciples.... Although he took upon himself everything pertaining to our condition as slaves, he took a slave's position in a way specially suited to our own arrangements when he rose from the table. He who feeds everything beneath the heavens was reclining among the apostles, the master among slaves, the fountain of wisdom among the ignorant, the Word among those untrained in the use of words, the source of wisdom among the unlettered. He who nourishes all was reclining and eating with his disciples. He who sustains the

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whole world was himself receiving sustenance. Moreover, he was not satisfied with the great favor he showed his servants by sharing a meal with them. Peter, Matthew and Philip, men of the earth, reclined with him, while Michael, Gabriel and the whole army of angels stood by. Oh, the wonder of it! The angels stood by in dread, while the disciples reclined with him with the utmost familiarity! And even this marvel did not content him. 'He rose from the table,' as Scripture says. He who is 'clothed in light as in a robe' was clad in a cloak. He who wraps the heavens in clouds wrapped round himself a towel. He who pours the water into the rivers and pools tipped some water into a basin. And he before whom every knee bends in heaven and on earth and under the earth knelt to wash the feet of his disciples." *Severian of Gabala (fl. ca. 400 AD)*

What do you know about Jesus? What do you know about the lost world? What do you know about His calling for your life? What should you *do* with what you *know*?

*Closing Prayer*

The LORD said to my Lord,  
"Sit at My right hand,  
Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."  
The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion.  
Rule in the midst of Your enemies!  
Your people *shall be* volunteers  
In the day of Your power;  
In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning,  
You have the dew of Your youth.

Psalm 110.1-3

**Psalm 110.1-3** (*Aurelia: The Church's One Foundation*)

"Sit by Me at My right hand," the LORD says to my Lord,  
"Until I make Your foot stand on all who hate Your Word."  
From in His Church the Savior rules all His enemies;  
While those who know His favor go forth the Lord to please.

### 3 Submitting without Understanding

Read and meditate on John 13.6, 7.

Jesus provides so many lessons on discipleship in this situation, that we need to take our time, and make sure we understand them all. Or at least, submit to them all.

<sup>6</sup>But when He came to Simon Peter, he said to Him, "Lord, and would You wash my feet?"

<sup>7</sup>And Jesus answered, "What I do you do not understand, not now. But shortly you will know."

- John 13.6, 7

Reflect

1. Let's try to put ourselves in the place of the disciples for a moment. Dinner had begun, yet evidently no one was available to wash everyone's feet beforehand. That didn't seem to bother the disciples – at least, not enough for anyone to volunteer for the task. So what do you suppose they might have been thinking as they saw Jesus rise from the table, take off His outer garment, and take up the towel and basin? Are we sometimes like the disciples here? Explain. Complete this prayer: *Lord, I admit, I'm not always alert to the opportunities that crop up around me to...*

2. Jesus began washing the disciples' feet. One important lesson in this situation is that the disciples should *experience* what it is like to be served by someone you love, and who loves you. Experiencing the grace of God is as important as hearing it proclaimed. Is there a disciple-making principle on display here? How might you incorporate that principle into your own calling to make disciples (Matt. 28.18-20)? *Lord, I believe You can use me as a channel of Your grace, to touch others with Your unconditional love. So today, as I go out into my Personal Mission Field...*

3. Peter was being Peter again, questioning, even *challenging* the Lord, inclining to what *he* thinks should be done, rather than submitting to what the *Lord* has said or was doing (cf. Lk. 5.1-8; Matt. 16.21-23). Was there any doubt in Peter's mind that Jesus intended to wash his feet? What was the real thrust of his question in verse 6? Why did he ask this? Do you ever find yourself asking a question like this of the Lord? Explain. *Lord, sometimes I think I know better than You what I need in my life at any moment. Help me to see You, Jesus, exalted in glory, and to remember that...*

4. See how gracious Jesus was in responding. He didn't chide Peter, as in Matthew 16.21-23. He simply acknowledged that what He was doing seemed to Peter upside-down, and difficult for him to understand. So why didn't Jesus just take this opportunity to explain, like He finally will in verses 12-17? What was He expecting of Peter? Do you ever find yourself in the place of Peter, not quite understanding what the Lord is doing or saying, and thus, hesitant to go forward? Explain. *Lord, the more clearly I see You, and the more truly I know You, the less I will...*

5. Jesus said that an explanation would be forthcoming, just not now. Here are two other principles of disciple-making. The first we considered in question 4: Whatever He says or wants to do, don't challenge, simply submit (cf. Jn. 2.3-5). The second is that, as much as we can, we should explain the work of following Jesus to those who believe in Him. Discipleship should make sense; there should be a rationale to why disciples do what they do. But what is the *focal point* and *final bar of appeal* of that rationale? Our ability to understand completely, or to make sense of everything? Or something else (cf. vv. 15-17)? What principle of

disciple-making can you discern from this? Bring together into one prayer the prayers you wrote for questions 1-4.

*Summary*

“The Lord of all creation washed his disciples’ feet! This was not an affront to his dignity but a demonstration of his boundless love for us. Yet however great his love was, Peter was well aware of his majesty. Always impetuous and quick to profess his faith, he was quick also to recognize the truth. The other disciples had let the Lord wash their feet, not with indifference but with fear and trembling. They dared not oppose the Master. Out of reverence, however, Peter would not permit it. He said, ‘Lord, are you going to wash my feet? You shall never wash my feet!’ Peter was adamant. He had the right feelings, but not understanding the full meaning of the incarnation, he first refused in a spirit of faith and afterward gratefully obeyed. This is how religious people ought to behave. They should not be obdurate in their decisions but should surrender to the will of God. For although Peter reasoned in human fashion, he changed his mind out of love for God.”  
*Severian of Gabala (fl. ca 400 AD)*

Following Jesus is about submitting to Jesus, regardless of whether what He commands or leads us to do makes sense to us. One day He will explain everything. For now, our duty is to submit. Is there any area of your discipleship where you are *not* submitting to Jesus, for whatever reason?

*Closing Prayer*

Teach me Your way, O LORD;  
I will walk in Your truth;  
Unite my heart to fear Your name.  
I will praise You, O Lord my God, with all my heart,  
And I will glorify Your name forevermore.  
For great *is* Your mercy toward me,  
And You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.  
O God, the proud have risen against me,  
And a mob of violent *men* have sought my life,  
And have not set You before them.  
But You, O Lord, *are* a God full of compassion, and gracious,  
Longsuffering and abundant in mercy and truth.  
Oh, turn to me, and have mercy on me!  
Give Your strength to Your servant,  
And save the son of Your maidservant.  
Show me a sign for good,  
That those who hate me may see *it* and be ashamed,  
Because You, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

Psalm 86.11-17

**Psalm 86.10-17** (*Andrews: Praise My Soul, the King of Heaven*)

For You are great, You wondrous deeds do;  
You are the only and sovereign Lord.  
Teach me Your way, let me give heed to,  
With all my heart, Savior, all Your Word!  
Lord, be gracious to me, Lord, be gracious to me,  
Praise Your Name forever, Lord!

Great is Your mercy, Lord, toward me;  
You have delivered my soul from hell.  
Though dreadful foes and threats arrayed be,

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You will Your grace and Your mercy tell!  
Lord, be gracious to me, Lord, be gracious to me,  
Slow to anger, loving well!

Turn to me, Lord; be gracious to me;  
Grant me Your strength; save Your servant, Lord!  
Let me a sign of something good see;  
Shame all who hate me beneath Your Word.  
Lord, be gracious to me, Lord, be gracious to me,  
For You help me, sovereign Lord!

## 4 Wash Away!

Read and meditate on John 13:8, 9.

Jesus' washing His disciples' feet symbolized more than an aspect of our calling to make disciples.

*<sup>8</sup>And Peter said to Him, "Lord, You shall never wash my feet!" "But if I do not wash you," Jesus answered, "you no part shall have with Me."<sup>9</sup>Then Peter answered, "Lord, then not my feet alone, but wash my head, and wash my hands as well!"*

- John 13:8, 9

Reflect

1. Let's give Peter the benefit of the doubt. What was he saying by objecting to Jesus washing his feet (v. 8)? Was there an element of appropriateness in this? Explain. Complete the following prayer: *Lord Jesus, I am not worthy or deserving of even the simplest everyday gift You bestow on me, so help me always to...*
2. On the other hand, Peter was missing an important point about his relationship with Jesus, which the Lord's washing his feet dramatically illustrated. What was that point? *Every moment, Lord, You keep me alive, giving me breath, sight, work, loved ones, and reminding me through them all that...*
3. To what was Jesus referring in the second part of verse 8? How does this *washing* occur in us? Of what does it consist? What is the effect of it? What makes Jesus uniquely qualified to perform this washing? How do we express this in the church? *Thank You, Lord, that You have washed...*
4. What did Jesus mean by having *a part* with Him? How would you explain to a new believer what it means to have a part with Jesus? A part in what? Of what? For what? *Thank You, Lord, that You have given me a part with You, and part that...*
5. Whatever that *part* is, Peter wanted it (v. 9). But does it seem to you that Peter and Jesus were thinking about the same thing? Do we sometimes get a little confused about what Jesus promises? Explain. Bring together your prayers from questions 1-4 into one prayer.

Summary

"As vehement as Peter was in self-deprecation, he was even more vehement in acquiescing. But he did both from love. For why didn't Jesus say why he was doing what he did, instead of adding a threat? He did so because Peter would not have been persuaded. For had he said, 'Let this be done to you because I am trying to persuade you to be humble minded,' Peter would have promised it ten thousand times so that his Master might not do this thing. But now what does Jesus say? He speaks of that which Peter most feared and dreaded—being separated from him. For it is Peter who continually asks, 'Where are you going?' Therefore he also said, 'I will give even my life for you.' And if, after hearing, 'What I do you do not understand now, but you will know later,' he still persisted, much more would he have done so had he learned [the meaning of the action]. Therefore Jesus says, 'but you shall know later,' being aware that should he learn it immediately he would still resist." *John Chrysostom (344-407 AD)*

How would you describe the *part* you have with Jesus?

*Closing Prayer*

The LORD *is* my light and my salvation;  
Whom shall I fear?  
The LORD *is* the strength of my life;  
Of whom shall I be afraid?  
When the wicked came against me  
To eat up my flesh,  
My enemies and foes,  
They stumbled and fell.  
Though an army may encamp against me,  
My heart shall not fear;  
Though war may rise against me,  
In this I *will be* confident.  
One *thing* I have desired of the LORD,  
That will I seek:  
That I may dwell in the house of the LORD  
All the days of my life,  
To behold the beauty of the LORD,  
And to inquire in His temple.

Psalm 27.1-4

**Psalm 27.1-6** (*Joanna: Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise*)  
Lord, You are our Light and our Savior most dear!  
You guard us with might; therefore, whom shall we fear?  
Though evil surround us, our enemies fall;  
No harm shall confound us when on You we call.

One thing we request, but to dwell with You, Lord.  
Your beauty to test and to think on Your Word.  
In trouble You hide us secure in Your grace;  
No foe may o'erride us: We sing of Your praise!

## 5 Completely Clean

Read and meditate on John 13.10.

There is a once-for-all-time cleansing, and a need for ongoing cleansing. We need to make sure we understand the difference.

<sup>10</sup>But Jesus said,  
“He who is bathed need only wash his feet,  
but is completely clean; and you are clean,  
although not all of you.”

- John 13.10

Reflect

1. Jesus indicates that for those who follow Him, there is cleansing which makes us *completely clean*, and a washing which needs to be undertaken from time to time. What is He talking about? Complete this prayer: *Thank You, Lord Jesus, for washing my sins away once and for all; today, wash me from...*
2. The washing whereby believers become *completely clean* does not remove their *sins*, but their *sin*. Although this *completely clean* washing does not eliminate the need for *daily* washing, it provides the basis and incentive for such washing. Explain. *You have taken away my sin, Lord Jesus; today, cleanse me from my...*
3. Meditate on Galatians 4.6, 7. When does the once-for-all, *completely clean* washing occur? How does this *completely clean* washing occur, and what does it accomplish? *Thank You, Father, for Your indwelling Spirit, Who...*
4. Jesus said that whoever has been made *completely clean* “needs only to wash *his* feet...” Meditate on 1 John 1.8-10 and Psalm 51.1-14. What’s the difference between *confessing* sin and *repenting* of it? Can we truly have one of these without the other? How can we know when we need to “have our feet washed” (Ps. 139.23, 24)? *Convict me, Holy Spirit, and show me my sins, that I may...*
5. Finally, let’s consider the role of baptism in expressing what Jesus was talking about in this verse. Baptism does not save us. It is a *sign* and *symbol* of what God does for us once-for-all. Explain. Should a person need to be baptized more than once? Explain. Further, baptism serves as a *reminder* for those who are already baptized about their need for daily washing. Do you think baptism is important in the life of faith? For the Christian community? Explain. Bring together into one your prayers from questions 1-4.

Summary

“Jesus is giving clear notice that this washing of the feet indicates pardoning of sins, and not only that which is given once in baptism but in addition that by which the daily guilty actions of the faithful that everyone lives with in this life are cleansed by his daily grace. Our feet, by which we move about [and] touch the ground—and for this reason we cannot keep them free from contact with dirt, as we can the rest of our bodies—signify the necessity of our living on earth, by which we who are idle and negligent are daily affected to a great extent. Even outstanding people who live the highest kind of life are distracted from the heavenly contemplation that they love so much, so that ‘if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.’ The person who has been cleansed in the baptismal font and has received pardon for all his sins has no need to be cleansed again. Moreover, he cannot be cleansed again in the same way. He finds it necessary only to have the daily defilements of his worldly life wiped away by the daily forgiveness of his Redeemer. His whole body, together with its actions, is clean, with the exception merely of those things that cling to the mind because of the necessities of temporal cares. For their daily polluting and cleansing we say daily in prayer, ‘And forgive us our debts as we also forgive our debtors.’” *The Venerable Bede (672-735 AD)*

Jesus said we *need* to have our feet washed. Did He mean this literally? Should this become part of our daily walk with the Lord? Is it part of yours?

*Closing Prayer*

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;  
Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.  
Make me hear joy and gladness,  
*That* the bones You have broken may rejoice.  
Hide Your face from my sins,  
And blot out all my iniquities.  
Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.  
Do not cast me away from Your presence,  
And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.  
Restore to me the joy of Your salvation,  
And uphold me *by Your* generous Spirit.  
*Then* I will teach transgressors Your ways,  
And sinners shall be converted to You.

Psalm 51.7-13

**Psalm 51.7-13** (*Passion Choral: O Sacred Head, Now Wounded*)

In Jesus' blood and mercy, Lord, cleanse my evil heart!  
Let me washed, cleansed, renewed be and pure in whole and part.  
Bring joy again and gladness; look not upon my sin.  
Deliver me from sadness; renew me yet again!

Create in me a clean heart, renew me from within!  
Take not Your Spirit from me because of all my sin.  
Salvation's joy restore, Lord, and keep me in Your hand;  
Thus shall I tell Your strong Word to sinners in the land.

## 6 Jesus Knew

*Read and meditate on John 13.11*

John has already told us that Jesus knew what was in every person (Jn. 2.24, 25), and we say, “Of course! He’s God. He knows everything.” That’s true, but since we who believe in Him have the mind of Christ, we should consider if we might not be able to know more of what Jesus knows, and if so, how?

*“For Jesus knew who would betray Him. So He said, “But you are not all clean.”*

- John 13.11

*Reflect*

1. How many of the disciples’ feet did Jesus wash? What did He know about the next 24 hours as He was washing their feet? Washing His disciples’ feet was a gesture of love (v. 34), which He freely and humbly made, knowing that it would not be reciprocated by all of them. What do we learn about the love of Jesus from this? Complete this prayer: *Lord, I’m sure I don’t always love like this. My love for others tends to be selective and even conditional sometimes. Help me to love, Lord, as...*
2. Is it fair to say that Jesus loves the lost people in your Personal Mission Field? Even though some of them may never come to believe in Him? How is His love for them evident to you? What are the implications of this for your relationship with these people? *I know You love the lost, Lord, and I want to love them, too, because...*
3. Jesus knew who would betray Him. God had already revealed that in His Word. Look at Psalm 41.9, Psalm 55.12-14 and Psalm 109.1-16. Jesus specifically quoted Psalm 41 in John 13.18, and Peter cited Psalm 109 as referring to Judas (Acts 1.16-20). Does this teach us anything about how to read the Psalms, and *all* Scripture (recall Jn. 5.39)? Explain. Do you think that, if we read Scripture more from the perspective of its being the story of Jesus and His work of redemption, we might have a better understanding of the Bible? Of what Jesus wants for us? Why? *Lord, I confess I don’t always look for You when I’m reading Scripture. Sometimes I’m just reading, and sometimes I’m looking only at the surface of the text. I want to know You better and grow in You and Your grace. Help me as I read Your Word to...*
4. One of those whose feet Jesus washed was *not clean*. Why not? He’d been with Jesus and the disciples from the beginning. He’d preached, done the good works the others did, and was publicly identified as a follower of Jesus. But he was not clean, yet he managed to fool even his colleagues. Explain. Is there a caution for us here? *Lord, let my faith be daily proven and increased as I...*
5. Why is Jesus being so indirect and secretive about His betrayer? Why didn’t He just point the finger at Judas and tell him to get on with it? What was the effect of this indirection on the other disciples? Jesus was pleased to let His disciples think about it for a while. Is it good for us to introspect regarding our faith? Explain. Bring together into one your prayers from questions 1-4.

*Summary*

“Jesus clearly knew that Judas felt no kindness or wise consideration for his master. He also knew that Judas was full of devilishly bitter poison, and even while [his feet were being washed by Jesus] he was devising the means to betray him. Nevertheless, Jesus honored him just as much as the rest of the disciples and washed his feet as well, continually exhibiting his own unique love. Jesus did not express his anger, in fact, until he had tried every kind of objection. Note how this special quality is distinctive of the divine nature. Although God knows what is about to happen, he brings his punishment prematurely on no one. Rather, after bearing with

the guilty for as long as is possible or necessary, when he sees them in no way profiting from the delay but instead remaining in their self-chosen evil ways, then he finally punishes them, showing it to be actually the result of their perverse folly and not really an effect of his own counsel or will." *Cyril of Alexandria (375-444 AD)*

Faith and discipleship are not *earned*, but they must be *proven*. Explain.

*Closing Prayer*

O God, do not be far from me;  
O my God, make haste to help me!  
Let them be confounded *and* consumed  
Who are adversaries of my life;  
Let them be covered *with* reproach and dishonor  
Who seek my hurt.  
But I will hope continually,  
And will praise You yet more and more.  
My mouth shall tell of Your righteousness  
*And* Your salvation all the day,  
For I do not know *their* limits.  
I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD;  
I will make mention of Your righteousness, of Yours only.  
O God, You have taught me from my youth;  
And to this *day* I declare Your wondrous works.

Psalm 71.12-17

**Psalm 71.12-18, 3** (*Solid Rock: My Hope is Built on Nothing Less*)

O God be not too far from me; my ever-present Helper be!  
Consume and shame my enemies; let them reproached and humbled be.  
A Rock of habitation be; command Your Word to rescue me;  
My Rock and Fortress ever be!

But as for me my voice I raise to sing in hope and constant praise!  
With saving grace my voice will swell Your never-ending grace to tell.  
A Rock of habitation be; command Your Word to rescue me;  
My Rock and Fortress ever be!

O Lord, I praise Your righteousness, Who me from youth have taught and blessed.  
Forsake me not when I am old, 'til I Your mercies all have told!  
A Rock of habitation be; command Your Word to rescue me;  
My Rock and Fortress ever be!

## 7 A Part with Jesus

Read and meditate on John 13.1-11.

When the mindset of Jesus is our mindset, our lives will be like His.

*<sup>1</sup>Before the Passover, when Jesus knew His hour had come, when He would go unto the Father and depart this world, since He had loved His own (who were in the world), so He loved them unto the very end. <sup>2</sup>So then, when supper ended, and the devil in the heart of Judas, Simon's son, had set the resolution to betray Him, <sup>3</sup>Jesus, yet aware that God had put all things into His hands, that He had come from God, and to Him was returning, <sup>4</sup>rose from supper, laid aside His garments, took a towel, and made a girdle of it. <sup>5</sup>Pouring water in a basin after that, He then began to wash the feet of His disciples, and to wipe them with the towel and His own hands. <sup>6</sup>But when He came to Simon Peter, he said to Him, "Lord, and would You wash my feet?" <sup>7</sup>And Jesus answered, "What I do you do not understand, not now. But shortly you will know." <sup>8</sup>And Peter said to Him, "Lord, You shall never wash my feet!" "But if I do not wash you," Jesus answered, "you no part shall have with Me." <sup>9</sup>Then Peter answered, "Lord, then not my feet alone, but wash my head, and wash my hands as well!" <sup>10</sup>But Jesus said, "He who is bathed need only wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, although not all of you." <sup>11</sup>For Jesus knew who would betray Him. So He said, "But you are not all clean."*

- John 13.1-11

Reflect

1. John 13 is a study in mindset, specifically, what it means to have the mind of Christ. Briefly describe the various scenarios, understandings, and images that Jesus had in mind in these verses. What did He see with His mind's eye? What did He know? Complete this prayer: *Lord, I confess, much of the time I'm not very mindful about what I'm thinking. But I have Your mind, so...*

2. These thoughts would have stirred up certain affections in Jesus. What feelings were likely surfacing in Jesus' heart, as His mind brought these matters to His attention? Observing Jesus here, what can you say about the role of the mind – our thought life – in helping our affections – feelings, emotions – function properly? *Sometimes, Lord, I let my affections get the best of me. I get angry, or I resent someone, or I'm anxious or afraid. At such times, help me to remember...*

3. Conversely, let's look at Peter. Would you say that Peter was operating in this situation out of his *mind* more than his *heart*, or was it the other way around? Explain. Is there a caveat or lesson for us in this? *Give me a heart for You, Lord, and a mind saturated with Your Word, and I'll...*

4. What Jesus was thinking and feeling led Him to act. But before He could carry out His intentions, He had to prepare Himself. What did He do? As we grow in the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:16), and our hearts beat as one with His, we will be moved to act and serve others as well. Opportunities for doing so confront us every day. What would you suggest as a good way to prepare each morning to go into your Personal Mission Field with the mind, heart, and works of Jesus? *Lord, help me to prepare well every day for the work to which You've called me. As I go out to serve others, remind me that...*

5. As we shall see, Jesus was giving His disciples an *example* of how they should relate to one another. He was also providing an *experience* of God's grace at work. Explain. Is this an important part of the disciple-making process? Why? Finally, Jesus offered an *expression* of the grace of God at work in the soul. Explain. Bring together into one prayer the prayers you composed for questions 1-4.

#### *Summary*

"For what do these words 'to the end' mean but 'to Christ'? 'For Christ is the end of the law,' says the apostle, 'for righteousness to everyone that believes.' He is the end that consummates, not that consumes. He is the end that we are aiming for, not our end where we perish. It is exactly in this way that we are to understand the passage, 'Christ our Passover is sacrificed.' He is our end. We pass into him. For I see that these Gospel words may also be taken in a kind of human sense, that Christ loved his own even unto death, so that this may be the meaning of 'he loved them to the end.' This meaning is human, not divine, for it was not merely up to this point that we were loved by him who loves us always and endlessly. God forbid that he whose death could not end should have ended his love at death. Even after death that proud and ungodly rich man loved his five brothers. And is Christ to be thought of as loving us only till death? God forbid, beloved. He would have come in vain with a love for us that lasted till death, if that love had ended there. But perhaps the words 'he loved them unto the end' may have to be understood in this way, that he so loved them as to die for them. For this he testified when he said, 'Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.'" *Augustine (354-430 AD)*

The love Jesus showed His disciples is the love He wants us to bear toward one another, and to our neighbors. What obstacles do we need to overcome to love this way consistently? How can we help one another (Heb. 10:24)?

#### *Closing Prayer*

I have set the LORD always before me;  
Because *He is* at my right hand I shall not be moved.  
Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices;  
My flesh also will rest in hope.  
For You will not leave my soul in Sheol,  
Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.  
You will show me the path of life;  
In Your presence *is* fullness of joy;  
At Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore.

Psalm 16:8-11

#### **Psalm 16:8-11** (*All to Christ: Jesus Paid It All*)

You are ever with me, Lord; in You I shall not fall.  
But rejoicing in Your Word, I abide within Your call.

*The Gospel of John: John 13:1-11*

Make me know life's way! Pleasures fill Your hand;  
Fill my life with joy each day! Before Your face I stand.

Soon Your glory I shall see, for as Jesus rose again,  
You will come to gather me to my home with You in heav'n.  
Make me know life's way! Pleasures fill Your hand;  
Fill my life with joy each day! Before Your face I stand.

*The Gospel of John: John 13.1-11*

*Questions for reflection or discussion*

1. Paul says we who believe in Jesus have the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2.16). What does that mean for how we approach our daily lives?
2. What can we learn from Jesus about the role of the mind and heart – thoughts and affections – in the life of discipleship?
3. What does it mean to have “a part” with Jesus? How does that “part” come to expression in a disciple’s life?
4. What do we learn from Jesus here about doing the work God has appointed to us?
5. What’s the most important lesson you’ve learned from John 13.1-11? How are you putting that lesson to work in your walk with and work for the Lord?

*Items for prayer:*

## The Fellowship of Ailbe

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Thank you.