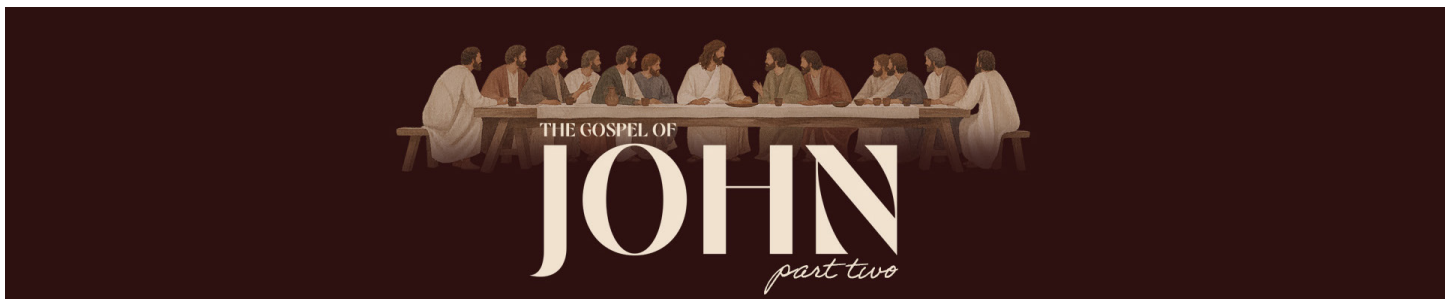




Sunday, October 4, 2026

John 13:21-30

Message

Last week, as we stepped into the second half of the book of John, we recognized that from this point forward everything we are now about to witness over the next eight chapters will focus on the last week of Jesus' life. And whereas Matthew, Mark and Luke record this exact same week, John's account is much more drawn out than theirs. John slows it down and focusses on the details so we can see clearly the price that was paid for us and the incredible love that Jesus Christ has for his children.

And so, last week we took a look at an event that is only recorded in John's gospel - the act of Jesus washing his disciples' feet - which served as a bit of a double focus for the disciples. While they were all sitting around the table discussing who was the greatest, the greatest among them - Jesus - took a wash basin and towel and began to clean each of their feet as a reminder to them of the value system in the kingdom of God. That those who are least, shall be great.

And then specifically, when he came to Peter, it was a reminder that salvation in Christ is our security, but sin still affects us. We still live in a fallen world and a society that is tormented by sin, and ultimately our feet still get dirty from being in the world, but not necessarily of the world.

And so when we sin, Jesus washes our feet - He forgives us of our sin and cleanses us once again from all unrighteousness. Which is a reminder that we are to continually live lives of repentance and consecration. That each of us still sins, and when we do, it is important that we confess our sins to the Lord because He is faithful, and just to forgive us and cleanse us.

And we see this element of sin play out in our text today as the attention now turns to Judas Iscariot whose heart has been firmly set on betraying Jesus. From this point forward, there is no turning back.

If you have your Bibles with you this morning I'd like to invite you to turn with me to John 13 where we will be reading verses 21 to 30. If you are able to, I'd also like to invite you to stand for the reading of the Word of the Lord.

John 13:21-30

'21 When Jesus had said this, he was troubled in his spirit and testified, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me."

22 The disciples started looking at one another—uncertain which one he was speaking about. 23 One of his disciples, the one Jesus loved, was reclining close beside Jesus. 24 Simon Peter motioned to him to find out who it was he was talking about. 25 So he leaned back against Jesus and asked him, "Lord, who is it?"

26 Jesus replied, "He's the one I give the piece of bread to after I have dipped it." When he had dipped the bread, he gave it to Judas, Simon Iscariot's son. 27 After Judas ate the piece of bread, Satan entered him. So Jesus told him, "What you're doing, do quickly."

28 None of those reclining at the table knew why he said this to him. 29 Since Judas kept the money-bag, some thought that Jesus was telling him, "Buy what we need for the festival," or that he should give something to the poor. 30 After receiving the piece of bread, he immediately left. And it was night.

Now, our text this morning is what is commonly referred to as the Judas sermon. It is here where we see the development of his character really come to a head, as Judas makes the definitive decision to move forward with his betrayal of Jesus.

And these few short verses give us one of the clearest pictures of just how far Judas' heart had moved away from Jesus. And it's not like we didn't see this coming. Because just in the last chapter, when Mary pours out that incredibly expensive perfume to anoint Jesus, Judas is the one who questions her actions, saying that it would have been better to sell it and give the money to the poor. But John tells us that this is just a ruse for Judas and that he didn't actually care about the poor. He was a thief who had been helping himself to the money that was entrusted to him.

So, even with that in mind, I think what's most heart-wrenching for me is vs. 21 where we read that Jesus was deeply troubled in His spirit, letting His disciples know that one of them is going to betray

Him.

And even though you and I know that He is referring to Judas, at that point the disciples had no idea. In fact, when we read the accounts in Matthew, Mark and Luke, we learn that the disciples started questioning who it could possibly be. And I don't think that this was an entirely complete surprise for them because all the way back in chapter 6, Jesus had already let them know that there was one amongst them who He referred to as a devil.

John 6:70–71

'Jesus replied to them, 'Didn't I choose you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil.' He was referring to Judas, Simon Iscariot's son, one of the Twelve, because he was going to betray him.'

Which, even before we get into the actual act of the betrayal, raises some pretty significant questions about Jesus choosing Judas in the first place.

Questions like: Why?

Why would Jesus choose eleven disciples whom He knew would follow Him, while also choosing Judas, whom He knew would eventually betray Him? Now, ultimately, we know that Jesus came to give His life for our sins. And we know that the cross wasn't an accident and that somehow all of this was part of God's plan. So did Jesus force Judas into this? Did Judas even really have a choice?

Because when you really think about it, if Jesus hadn't chosen Judas to be one of the Twelve in the first place, the likelihood of Judas ever being in a position to betray Him would have been slim to none.

Great questions. Glad you asked. lol.

I think the key thing to note is that Jesus knew Judas would betray Him, but He didn't choose Judas and then force him to do it.

Judas made his own choices. Jesus knew what those choices would eventually be and allowed them to play out as part of God's plan for the cross.

We actually talked about this same concept a few weeks ago when it came to the people who rejected Jesus and eventually pushed Him towards the cross. They saw Jesus, the miracles, and all of the

evidence, but their hearts were determined to believe that the Messiah would be something other than Jesus - someone who would come with force, might and power and completely eradicate their enemies with one swift blow.

But that's not how Jesus came.

Ultimately God knew exactly how they would respond even before they responded, yet He did not change who Jesus was in order to accommodate their expectations. He revealed His Son exactly as He is. And the more clearly Jesus revealed Himself, the more their rejection of Him exposed what was already in their hearts.

God didn't make them hate Jesus or force them to crucify Him. They were responsible for what they did, and still had the ability to turn to Him but they wouldn't. And God used even that to accomplish His plan.

And the same thing is true with Judas. Jesus still loved him. He spent three years with him, taught him, included him with the disciples and even washed his feet knowing what he was about to do.

Jesus didn't choose Judas and then force him to become the betrayer. He knew Judas' character. He knew his heart. He knew how deeply his love of money would eventually lead him to betray Jesus. And He allowed Judas to make his own choices, knowing that even those choices would ultimately become part of the plan.

And yet we have to understand that there was always room for Judas to turn his heart back to Jesus. In fact, I can't help but wonder if the washing of Judas' feet was one final expression of Jesus showing him just how deeply He loved him. Jesus knew Judas would still reject Him. He knew what Judas was about to do. And yet He didn't allow any of that to stop Him from kneeling down and washing his feet. Wow....

The disciples were clueless to all of this though. Even when Jesus said that the one whom He would give the bread to would be His betrayer, they still had no idea it was Judas! They thought that His words were somehow connected to the feast and the things He needed Judas to pick up...because he held the money-bag.

And the fact that they recognized Judas as the one with access to the money tells us that there was obviously a certain level of trust placed in him. But John lets us know that Judas was deceitful and

had his hand in the cookie-jar on numerous occasions, but we are unsure whether the disciples knew this at the time or not.

Jesus knew.

And as soon as Judas took the bread - it was his admission and acceptance of his role as betrayer. And it was at that moment we read that Satan entered him.

Judas was a master deceiver - this was nothing new. He hid his love of money behind the facade of care for the poor and he dipped his hand in the bag and took whatever he wanted whenever he wanted.

And, just because we read that Satan entered Judas in that moment, doesn't mean that previously Satan had no contact with him. Absolutely not. John has already told us at the beginning of this chapter that the devil had put it into Judas' heart to betray Jesus. And this progression shows us that Satan had been grooming him all along. And his way in was through Judas' love of money. How many times had Judas heard Jesus say...?

Matthew 6:24

'No one can serve two masters, since either he will hate one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.'

Yet all along, Judas would hear these teachings with his hand in the jar.

Now, I think it's important that we understand that Judas' struggle with money isn't nearly as foreign to us as we may think.

Because the problem really isn't directly with money. You see, Scripture never actually says that money is evil. The problem is what happens when money moves from something that we control to something that controls us.

That's why Paul says:

1 Timothy 6:10

'For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil...'

And the craziest thing about this is that you don't have to be wealthy to love money. You can have very little and still be consumed by getting more, holding onto what you have, comparing yourself with others, or believing that if you could just have a little bit more, then finally you would feel secure.

Example: There are certain days when I wait and wait in line at the gas station or shoppers drug mart because the people ahead of me all have their lotto tickets that they're playing or numbers that they're scanning. And most of them don't win anything. But they keep coming back, spending more money, hoping that maybe this time they'll hit the jackpot.

And that's my point. You don't have to have money to love money. In fact, the love of money can be just as powerful in the pursuit of what you don't have as it can be in holding onto what you do have.

And ultimately, that's why Jesus says:

Matthew 6:24

'No one can serve two masters...You cannot serve both God and money.'

Notice Jesus doesn't say you can't have money.

He says you can't serve money.

Because the question isn't really how much money you have. The question is how much of you, your money has. This is what is meant by the 'love' of money.

This is why for us as Christians, all throughout the New Testament is the reminder to live generously. Because ultimately, where the spirit of generosity exists, the spirit of thievery cannot. Generosity pushes against the love of money because every time we willingly give something away, we're reminding our hearts: This doesn't own me. My security isn't in what I have. My security is in the Lord.

Example: I don't mind sharing this with you, but Jordan and I have made a regular practice of tithing on our income since we were married. And even when it comes to buying and selling pieces of furniture on the side as a hobby, I still like to give from that.

At first, honestly, it probably felt more like an obligation - I made money, so I have to give. But

somewhere along the way I decided to lean into it. Instead of always trying to figure out the percentage I had to give, sometimes I would intentionally give a little more. It became my own little way of reminding my heart: Money doesn't own me. I can let it go.

And sometimes that's harder than others. But lately, I've actually found myself enjoying it more, because instead of focusing on what I'm giving away, I've started looking at what God has blessed me with in the first place.

And maybe that's part of why Scripture tells us that God loves a cheerful giver. Because giving really can become joyful. It doesn't have to feel like something is being taken from us. It can become an opportunity to look at what God has placed in our hands and genuinely say, 'Lord, thank You. You've been good to me, and I want to be generous with what You've given me.'

But for Judas, this was all such a foreign concept. For him, the love of money was something he continually refused to surrender. And little by little, something he refused to surrender became something the enemy could take advantage of.

Now follow the progression. Earlier in the chapter - in verse 2 - we read that Satan had put it in the heart of Judas to carry out this act of betrayal.

And now, as we come to his moment of admission, we have to remember that Jesus has just told His disciples - in verse 18 and 26 - that the person He hands this dipped piece of bread to will be His betrayer. Jesus dips the bread, hands it directly to Judas, and Judas willingly takes it. Notice that he doesn't deny it. He doesn't push it away. He takes the bread. And upon his act of admission - now we read that Satan enters him.

There's a bit of a rabbit trail that some people take here as it pertains to the oppression and possession of people by demons - and whereas that is absolutely real, I don't think that's the point John is trying to make here. I think what we're seeing here is the very real progressive nature of sin when it is continually left unsundered.

That, what may have begun simply as an attraction to money well before John 6, had moved into influence by the beginning of John 13 and now had become something much deeper. Judas had continually opened his heart to what the enemy was doing, and now Satan's influence over him had reached an entirely different level of control.

Remember James' words on this too:

James 1:14-15

'But each person is tempted when he is drawn away and enticed by his own evil desire. 15 Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death.'

So, according to James it all starts with the desires of our hearts. We all desire something - whether good or bad and the logic is simple. If we don't curb our negative desires but feed them, then they have the potential to influence and if we aren't careful, eventually overtake us - just like with Judas. However, even though James doesn't specifically say it, the converse is true as well. If we continually feed what is good and godly, then those desires will grow and have a godly influence on our lives.

Again - this is why it is so important that we - as Christians - live holy and consecrated lives before the Lord. That we don't give an inch to sin, because that inch can easily become a mile. Instead, when we sin - when we get our feet dirty - we don't justify it or dismiss it, but confess it and allow Jesus to wash our feet - to forgive us from our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

So yes, the ultimate demise of Judas is a strong reminder to continually be vigilant so that we don't allow the enemy to gain a foothold in our lives in any way shape or form.

Unfortunately Judas didn't heed that warning and as he took the bread, Satan entered him, and Jesus said do what you need to do but do it quickly. Judas leaves and then interestingly, John lets us know that it was night.

Isn't that fitting. And I think it's supposed to be because John wants us to feel the theological weight of that statement.

You see, Judas had spent three years walking beside the Light of the World, and now, as Satan enters him, he gets up from the table and literally turns his back on the Light and walks out into the night embracing the darkness. He's made his choice.

As difficult as that interaction would have been, Jesus doesn't go chasing after Judas. I imagine He lets the door close, and even as He remains deeply troubled by what has just happened, He keeps His focus on the path ahead. And his following message to the remaining disciples is one that they won't soon forget.

We'll get to that next week but for today I find it fitting that we move right into communion:

1 Corinthians 11:23-29

'For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: On the night when he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

25 In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, and said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

27 So, then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sin against the body and blood of the Lord. 28 Let a person examine himself; in this way let him eat the bread and drink from the cup. 29 For whoever eats and drinks without recognizing the body, eats and drinks judgment on himself.

BLESSING

May the Lord Bless you and Keep you
May He cause His face to Shine upon you
May He be gracious towards you
Lifting up His countenance upon you
And may He give you peace
In Jesus name, Amen.

Josh Hageman

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