



¹ Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. ² And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him; ³ Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; ⁴ He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. ⁵ After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. ⁶ Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? ⁷ Jesus answered and said unto him, *What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.* ⁸ Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, *If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.* ⁹ Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. ¹⁰ Jesus saith to him, *He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.* ¹¹ For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, *Ye are not all clean.* ¹² So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, *Know ye what I have done to you?* ¹³ *Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.* ¹⁴ *If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.* ¹⁵ *For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.* ¹⁶ *Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.* ¹⁷ *If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.* (John 13:1-17)

This is a very difficult passage to comment on owing to the strong emotion provoked by its tenderness. The text itself is its own witness, and what can a simple mortal add to its dimensions of unmitigated beauty and immeasurable grace?

Now before the feast of the passover..... To which Passover does this refer? Does it make reference to that bloody first Passover in Egypt at which an innocent and spotless lamb without blemish was sacrificed as a sin-covering for the Children of Israel? Does it refer to those same animal sacrifices that have pertained to every intervening sacrifice since that day? No, this Passover will be different for it is the True Passover to which all of those foreshadowing's in Egypt, the Wilderness Church, and the Temple since have

mirrored. It is truly the Lord's Passover at last! This is the Passover at which the spotless and unblemished Lamb of God will be offered up precisely at the hour of the Temple sacrifice in Jerusalem. Just as the unleavened bread of the ancient Passover typified the Body of Christ, so, too, does the unleavened Bread of Holy Communion represent that whole loaf and Body of Christ. *Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.* (1 Cor 5:7-8)

Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. Real and divine love will not be a temporary love, but a love that will see you through to the very end. Note that it was *His own which were in the world* that Jesus loved until the end. The end of the unrighteous is without love or the benefits of grace. The tenderness of this expression is beyond embellishment!

And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him. What a horror that a man and close confidante of the Son of God would betray Him! Christ knew the heart Judas from the beginning. He knew that Judas was an inalterable reprobate when He called him. Of Judas, our Lord had made reference much earlier: *Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?* (John 6:70) I remind the reader devils are beyond salvation by the nature of their character. This will be the last night on earth for Judas - he will never glimpse another sunrise, for this night, his wretched soul was so overburdened by unrepented guilt that he hanged himself.

Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God. How pregnant with meaning is this verse! The coming of the Son of God as a tiny baby in Bethlehem was an occasion of parental rejoicing. And the return of our Lord to His Father will, likewise, be an occasion of rejoicing. But please do not overlook the momentous event that intercedes those two events. Our Lord knew that the victory had been granted Him by the Father already, yet the most terrible and bloody battle of that victory must be endured beginning this very night!

He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. Please observe with what humility Christ begins this last act of servitude to the disciples. His only garment becomes a towel. It must have seemed odd to the disciples. We must be prepared to serve Christ with only that towel of humility with which He has washed us. We must likewise gird ourselves in humility if we are to be servants to the Body of Christ. Sorry, Romanizing Anglo-Catholics - miters and fine silk robes will not suffice! *After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.* Because of the dusty roads and the footwear of sandals, a person's feet were soiled more than any other part. It was a symbol of honor to the visitor to have their feet washed. But that honor fell to the lowliest servant of the household. That is what Christ became for us - not to be exalted, but to save us.

Poor old obstinate Peter could not believe our Lord would wash HIS feet. It seemed unimaginable to Peter! *Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?* Peter knew of his total unworthiness to have his feet washed by Jesus; but that was the whole point. In fact, Peter was not worthy; and neither are you and I. It is out of an unfathomable love and a work of Grace that our Lord does so. On this night, our Lord washed the feet of every Christian - past, present, and future! *Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.* The will of God sometimes seems strange to us, but we must trust Him, nonetheless, for every act of Providence is founded on wisdom. We may not

understand presently, but we shall understand in time or eternity! If we reject the washing of the Lord, we have no part in His Kingdom. *Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.* Peter knows that the Lord speaks out of a mysterious and presently hidden meaning. He now would have his whole body washed; but the foot-washing was symbolic of the whole just as baptism represents the same. No need to drown the baptized - it is the washing of the soul and conscience that is the paramount symbol.

Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, *Ye are not all clean.* Herein lies further unassailable evidence that Judas was damned. Though he had participated in the ceremony, his heart was still full of wickedness - that part had not been washed!

So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? That washing was not done by the will of those in attendance, but by our Lord. He did it 'TO' them - not WITH them! Do you fully understand the sense and meaning of servitude? Do you understand how our Lord can cleanse such reprobates as we naturally are and make us even whiter than snow? (see Psalm 51:7) *Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.* Can you grasp the magnitude in importance of this point? The closer to God in faith and wisdom we draw, the greater the responsibility to demonstrate humility and servitude to others. *For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.* Servants are like our Lord in this example. They do not groom themselves in finery and luxury - a towel may be their only apparel.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If our Lord makes such a profound demonstration of humility, how great is the compulsion that we should do likewise! If Christ has sent you as a witness to others, or as a minister of His Word, do you believe that you should wear vestments that, if sold, would feed one thousand hungry children in one day? Should you be constantly seeking to better your neighbor in outward wealth and appearance, and disregard the great need of Christians for simple rags to cover their nakedness?

Mechanically following a ritual will not suffice. We must understand and love those values the symbols represent. An unworthy partaking of the Lord's Supper may impress others, but it redounds to our dismal guilt of the *body and blood of the Lord.* (1 Cor 11:27) The inward spiritual grace must be reflected in the outward form.

If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. Are you happy? If not, learn of Him and serve both our Lord and His Body - the Church, and be happy!