

Revisiting The First Communion Handout  
March 18, 2018 FBC - DL

Introduction

- We don't have a lot of details about what heaven will be like or what we will be doing.
- I have told people that I would appreciate having a super theatre that would take me back in real time to great events from Biblical history. Remember the "You are There"- old TV show?
- Wouldn't it be great to stand with Moses on Mt. Sinai, or on the edge of the Red Sea, or as we just studied to listen to Jehoshaphat's prayer of II Chron. 20?
- I'm not sure I would like to see the events surrounding the crucifixion, but I would like to listen in at the first Communion service.
- We know that the first Communion service we really the Passover meal that Jesus celebrated with His disciples where He took some of the elements of that service and instituted a new memorial for believers in Christ... Communion.
- This past week I have looked again at the first Communion service and the events surrounding it and imagined what it would be like to be there.
- So come with me through the miracle of the Scriptural record as we recount the events of the Passover and Communion not by video but the written Word.

I. The Wasting of the Expensive Ointment: Matt. 26:6-13, Mk. 14:3-9; Jn. 12:2-8

- By combining the three Gospel accounts we learn that Jesus is a guest in the home of Simon the leper in Bethany (Just SE of Jerusalem).
- This account differs from the "sinner's" anointing of Jesus in Lk. 7:36-50, for here the woman anointing Jesus was Mary of Bethany six days before the Passover. READ John 12:1-8
- In Mark's account we see that wasn't just Judas upset but it says that "some" were indignantly remarking to one another, "why has this perfume been wasted?" (approximately a year's salary for a rural worker) "And they were scolding her." 5
- And Matthew's account says that it was the "disciples" who were indignant when they saw this, and said, "Why this waste?" Not just Judas, or some, but the disciples were upset at this waste.
- Jesus knew what was ahead of Him in the coming days, can you imagine how He felt at the disciples reaction? And how Mary must have felt?
- Jesus said, "Let her alone, do not bother her. She has done what she could. She has done a good deed to me, because the poor you will always have with you, but you won't always have me. She did this to prepare Me for burial. Wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world that which this woman had done will be spoken in memory of her." ("She has done what she could"... good test of our faithfulness; have we always done what we could?)
- What about these responses? Do they have a point? Would we have considered that wasteful? To be used for a more noble purpose? Were they right in being indignant and scolding her when she "was doing a good deed; what she could; to prepare Christ for His burial?"
- I'd like to think that I would have been on Jesus's side praising Mary, but would I have been?
- Fast forward to a second scene in the review of the Passover/communion.

## II. The Refusal to Wash the Other Guy's Feet - John 13:1-15

-I grew up in a family of 4 boys and one of them (who shall remain nameless) had a problem with his feet smelling. (you've heard of the upside down boy whose feet smelled and nose ran?")

-Maybe it was his shoes, or lack of a boy's hygiene, or a genetic problem, who knows? Since we shared a bedroom, I was the one who noticed at bedtime and would squeal on him... and he'd have to go wash his feet in the tub.

-But now imagine, you are at supper; and you recline on your side so that your feet are not far from your neighbor's head and another disciple's feet are near your head... but there is more; add the dirt and grime and animal waste of the first century streets to your feet and let me ask you: "How's your meal?"

-Usually, the servant of the household would meet you at the door and wash your feet before the meal... but there was no servant in the room where the Passover was held...and none of the disciples jumped at the chance to be a servant.

John 13:3-5. Jesus shouldn't have been the one doing that, but would I have taken that role of a servant? Would you? "He rose from supper..." so supper was going on; Jesus had given ample time for a servant to show up; but none showed.

-Why did Jesus? John 13:1 "He loved them... to the end." i.e. end to the degree.

-The next scene will give you some insight as to why Peter, James and John or any of the other disciples didn't want to take the role of a servant.

## III. The Argument over Who Was the Greatest - Luke 22:24 "And there arose also a dispute among them as to which one of them was regarded to be greatest."

-The context says that the supper was ongoing and Jesus just mentioned that one of them would betray Jesus. The disciples discussed this for a bit but turned it 180 degrees from betrayal to "which one of them was regarded to be greatest."

-It wasn't a new discussion; they'd had it before. In Lk 9:46 Jesus foretells His being delivered into the hands of men; they didn't understand but were afraid to ask. Instead they broke into an argument over "which of them might be the greatest." 46

-In Mark 9:33 Jesus asked them what they had been discussing; sheepishly they didn't answer but it had been the same ole same ole... "which of them was greatest."

vs. 34

-Jesus took a child and stood him by His side saying: "Whoever receives this child in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me; for he who is least among you; this is the one who is great." Lk. 9:48 see also Lk 22:25-27.

-Another scene shows:

## IV. The Removal of Judas the Betrayer - Mt. 26:21-25; Mk. 14:18-24; Lk. 22:21-23; Jn.

13:21-30, John 13:21-30. Interesting that "no one knew" why Jesus had said: "What you do, do quickly;" thinking it was something to do with purchasing for the feast or giving to the poor since Judas had the "money box."

-Judas must have been a good faker... he was a pilferer of the money-box (Jn 12:6). Ever know anyone who was a hypocrite? Two faced? Dishonest? Had secrets?

V. The Denial of Peter ("all of them") - Mt. 26:21-35; Mk. 14:27-32; Lk. 22:31-38; Jn. 13:37-38

-We are familiar with Peter's denial with cursing and swearing (Lk. 22:54-62; Mt. 26:69-75)) that he never knew Jesus but Jesus predicted that denial shortly after the Passover meal (Lk. 22:28-34; Mt. 26:31-35; Mk 14:26-31; Jn 13:37-38).

-And what we sometimes fail to notice is that Peter was not the only one who promised never to deny the Lord: Mark 14:30-31 "And Jesus said to him, 'Truly I say to you, that you yourself, this very night, before a cock crows twice, shall three times deny Me. But Peter kept saying insistently, 'Even if I have to die with you, I will not deny You.' And they all were saying the same thing, too."

-And then two other quick scenes after the Supper.

VI. The Sleeping Disciples When Jesus needed a Friend - Mt. 26:3-46; Mk 14:32-42; Lk. 22:39-46; John 18:1

-With His arrest imminent; if ever a time that Jesus needed His friends by His side it was at the Garden of Gethsemane.

-With the weight of His upcoming sacrifice for the sins of the world weighing down on Him, Jesus prayed for that cup to be removed from Him but willingly submitted to the Father's will. His prayer was so intense that His sweat became like drops of blood, falling down upon the ground. (Lk. 22:44)

-So what are our disciple friends doing? Sleeping... yes, sleeping. But even that action is better than the last scene we have of them.

VII. The Disciples Deserting Him and Fleeing - Mk. 14:50; "And they all left Him and fled." "Then all the disciples left Him and fled." Mt 26:56

Conclusion: OK so now do you want to relive those scenes surrounding the Lord's Supper? After studying these events again; I'm not sure I want to.

-Greedy, proud, self-centered, self-deceived, under Satanic influence, fleshly, cowards were they... these are Jesus' disciples; His pupils; learners upon whom the mantle of spreading Christianity would soon fall.

-Do these snapshots make you think less of the disciples? Or more of Jesus?

-I am not distorting the Scriptural accounts; and I did not review these events to put down the disciples. I didn't go over these seedy details to make the disciples look bad... but show us Jesus, and to expose us.

-We of the 21st century are no different from them. They are us and we are them: at times greedy, unkindly scolding others if not in words, in our minds; we are proud; often self-centered and self-deceived; at times living fleshly lives and living close to Satan's influence.

-We share the same emotions, fear, joys and sorrows. We have the same passions, and know the same hunger of heart. We are not so different from these disciples. Goethe said, "Mankind is always changing, but man is always the same."

-And you know what? The Lord Jesus loved those rascals; He loved them to the endth degree; He loved them so much that He pursued them up a hill called Calvary; onto the sliver filled cross; and He loved them so much that He died for them taking upon Himself all of their failures and sin... so that they might become NEW in Christ..

-These failures became the writers under the inspiration of the HS of the NT; they became the missionaries and carriers of the message of salvation so that it could be said that they "turned the world upside down." (Acts 17:6)

-So we stand with these failing disciples as another generation of failing disciples and like Jehoshaphat of old we say: Lord, we don't have the power to live as we ought; we don't even know how...but our eyes are upon you!

Open our ears to hear your word that if we confess our sin you are faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. I Jn. 1:9

Enable our hearts to truly trust you; not only for the forgiveness of our sin, but to enable us to live our lives to be pleasing to you.

And Lord, fill our lips with worship, praise, thanksgiving and song for all you are and for all you have done.

Communion Service