

**CALVARY PANDAN BIBLE-  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

[Adapted from Bethel Bible-Presbyterian Church,  
10 Downing St. Oakleigh, Vic., 3166]

**DHW BIBLE CLASS  
LESSON 35  
THE LIFE OF CHRIST**

**INTRODUCTION**

Jesus' public ministry was drawing to a close, leading to His betrayal and crucifixion. The celebration of the Passover feast was near. He would be spending His final hours with His disciples to give them His last instructions and to comfort them. In these last hours, He ate the Passover with them, identified His betrayer, and predicted His death, resurrection, and ascension. He instituted the Lord's Supper that would commemorate His redemptive work until He returns. The scene is very touching for it shows how concerned the Lord Jesus Christ was for His disciples as He shared His soon departure with them. At the same time, He was "troubled in spirit" because one of the Twelve, whom He had chosen and loved, and had been with Him for more than three years, was to betray Him to His enemies. We are truly standing on holy ground and our study should move us to reconsider our love and devotion to Christ, our great Redeemer.

**OUTLINE**

1. Jesus Commemorates the Final Passover with His Disciples (Luke 22:7-18, Matthew 26:17-20, Mark 14:12-17)
2. Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet (John 13:1-20)
3. Jesus Identifies His Betrayer (John 13:21-35, Matthew 26:21-25, Mark 14:18-21, Luke 22:21-23)
4. Jesus Institutes the Lord's Supper (Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:19-20, 1 Corinthians 11:23-25)
5. Jesus Rebukes the Selfish Ambition of His Disciples (Luke 22:24-30)

**COMMENTARY**

**Jesus Commemorates the Final  
Passover with His Disciples**

The feast of the Passover and Unleavened Bread was nearing. The disciples asked Jesus where He wanted them to eat the Passover together. Jesus sent Peter and John to go to the city of Jerusalem, and there they would meet a man bearing a pitcher of water. They were to follow him into the house where he would enter in. They were to say to the man, "The Master saith, 'My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at thy house with my disciples.'" The disciples were to ask him for the place where He should eat the Passover with His disciples. The man would show

them a large furnished upper room. Peter and John were to prepare the place for the observance of the Passover.

We all know of the meaning of the Passover from our study of Exodus, especially in chapter 12. On that night, every Jewish family (or even any Egyptian family), who believed and obeyed God's instructions to kill a lamb and apply the blood of the lamb on the doorposts and lintel, would be spared the death of their first born son. The following day after the Passover, and for the next seven days, the family must not have any leaven in the house, and they were to eat only unleavened bread. Since that day, the Jews have faithfully kept the Passover. Every God-fearing Jewish family has not failed to observe it and remember the great deliverance by the LORD God from bondage and death of their forefathers about three thousand five hundred years ago! This is a great testimony of the reliability of the Exodus record. It also reveals God's holiness and mercy towards man. Obedience to Him results in blessing, disobedience death.

When Peter and John came to the city, they found the man with the pitcher as Jesus had told them, and they made ready the Passover. The explanation for Jesus' foreknowledge of the man who was to open his house for the Passover is not given. Some explain that Jesus being God exercised His divine power of knowing everything. That is true. But it could also be true that

Jesus did not use His divine power. Instead He might have pre-arranged with the man. The latter explanation would be more likely the case since Jesus was not in the habit of using His divine power unnecessarily and purposelessly. That is often man's propensity.

When the hour came to observe the Passover, Jesus gathered with His disciples in the upper room. Jesus expressed His long-held desire to eat this Passover with them before His suffering. They all recalled how God saved their nation Israel in the exodus from Egypt. Jesus also said to them that He would not eat this meal again with them "until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God." This last statement by Jesus is significant. It means firstly that Jesus would not eat the Passover again with them until His return when the kingdom of God would be established. Secondly, since the kingdom of God is clearly in the future, Jesus was signalling a new stage in God's plan of redemptive work. The Passover does not point only to the sacrificial and vicarious death of the Lamb of God, but beyond to the time when the Lord Jesus Christ returns and establishes His kingdom. It will then be the consummation of the redemption plan when Jesus will eat again the Passover meal with all His disciples, who represent the nation Israel.

Jesus took the cup and gave thanks. So they drank and ate the meal. The thanksgiving for the cup and meal was given to God for His act of provision

and salvation. All of them shared the same gratitude.

### **Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet**

Jesus and the disciples had just eaten the Passover. John's statement here does not contradict the record of the other gospels. John could well mean just before the end of the Passover meal itself, thus setting the stage for the Lord's Supper. Jesus knew that "His hour was come," and that He should depart this world to be with His Father in Heaven again. Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end. Jesus knew that the time of His death was near, and that He would rise from the dead, and that He would ascend to Heaven. Jesus loved (Greek, *agape*, the divine love) His own who were in the world. This is obviously a reference to His disciples and followers who believed in Him. He loved them to the very end. That is divine election and no one can pluck them out of His hand, for all those who truly believe in and receive Him!

However, there was a disappointment and sorrow over Judas. Jesus loved him but he was set in his mind and heart to betray Jesus. He had opened his heart and mind to the influence of Satan to commit this heinous crime and sin. His stubborn unbelief therefore sealed him off God's mercy and forgiveness. Although Judas betrayed Him, Jesus knew that God His Father had given Him all things. God was in control. He came from God and He was going back to God, the only

begotten Son of God. His death would benefit the world. He knew the certainty of His victory. Here is another testimony by Jesus that He is the Son of God.

Jesus then did something most unusual. He took off his robe and girded a towel round his waist. This was the figure of a slave. He then poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and wipe them with the towel. They all saw what Jesus did. He came to Peter, probably first, judging by Peter's vehement protest. This was not the usual washing of feet that the host of a house would render to his guest. It was different. The act was symbolic — an act that would always be necessary. Jesus said to Peter, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit." In those days after the people took their baths they had to walk to the dressing place. Along the way, their feet might have contracted dust or dirt, and the washing of feet was necessary in order to remove the dust or dirt. They wore open sandals. So Peter let the Lord Jesus wash his feet because Jesus said to him that if he would not allow Him to wash his feet, he would have no part with Him. Jesus also washed the feet of all the other disciples including Judas.

Jesus then taught them the significance of His washing their feet. After Jesus had taken upon Himself the role of a slave by washing their feet, He then resumed His place of dignity and authority. He said, "*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.*" Jesus had set the example. This writer does not believe that Jesus was teaching His disciples to literally wash one another's feet. It was their culture at that time to do so. Its significance and teaching is much more than the mere physical act. That Jesus was teaching humility is true. That is one aspect. Jesus ended with the beatitude, "If ye know these things, happy (blessed) are ye if ye do them." This humility must be expressed in practical ways by serving one another. Those who want to be the greater must serve the younger; the stronger serve the weaker with a view to build them up, not to cut them down. Humility in theory without practice is of no value. There is also a spiritual aspect to it. Every Christian is completely cleansed of his sins just as Jesus said to Peter, "he that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit." But in our daily living, we do sin against God. This is a fact. We therefore need this daily "washing of the feet" by confessing our sins and receiving forgiveness from God.

When Jesus said that not all of them were clean, He was thinking of the Twelve. Judas was not clean. That blessing He had just pronounced would not be true for Judas because he rejected Jesus. It is only true for those who truly receive Him. Jesus said that He knew whom He had chosen, but there was one who would betray Him having been with Him for three years.

This happened so that the Scripture may be fulfilled (Psalm 41:9).<sup>1</sup> Jesus mentioned this to them so that when it happened they would believe that He is not simply the victim of a plot, but they might believe that He was the "I AM." He is YAHWEH GOD who was giving His life for the sins of the world. Those who receive His apostles and messengers in the future receive Him. By the same token, those who receive Him, receive the Father who sent Him! To know Christ is to know God. To reject Christ is to reject God.

### **Jesus Identifies His Betrayer**

When Jesus had just said that one of them who ate with Him had "lifted his heel against" Him, he was "troubled in spirit." Jesus was in the midst of the presence of evil of the worst kind, a treachery that was devious and diabolical. Jesus testified that "the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table." Because Jesus did not reveal him by name, it caused the Twelve to ask one another who would do such a thing. "Is it I? Is it I?" they questioned one another.

Peter suggested to John who was leaning on Jesus' bosom, to ask Jesus who the betrayer was. So John asked Jesus, "Lord, who is it?" Jesus then answered that the disciple was the one whom He would give him a sop after dipping it into the gravy. Jesus quickly added, "*The Son of man indeed goeth*

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<sup>1</sup> Psalm 41:9 Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.

*as it is written (as it was determined) of Him: but woe to that man whom the Son of man is betrayed!*" Jesus gave the sop to Judas Iscariot. But look at Judas, what a hypocrite and deceiver. He asked Jesus, "Master, is it I?" Jesus said to him, "Thou hast said." Satan entered into him. Then Jesus said to him, "That thou doest, do quickly." For some unexplained reasons, no other disciples around the table could make out Jesus' intention for saying that to Judas. Some thought that Jesus told him to go and buy some things which they needed for the feast; others thought that he should give something to the poor because Judas was their treasurer. They had been fooled by Judas who appeared to be sincere and loyal. Judas after receiving the sop went out immediately; and it was night (How symbolic it is—it must be the darkest night of his life!).

There are three things that are notable: Judas' hypocrisy, the line between divine determinism and human responsibility, and Satan's entering into Judas.

Apart from Judas, the other disciples did not suspect Judas to be disloyal and deceitful. They thought that he was as good a disciple as they were. Judas was able to maintain a credible outward appearance of being a faithful disciple although he had just gone to the chief priests and made a deal with them to betray Jesus. At the table, he knew that Jesus was saying about him. But he could pretend and said to Jesus, "Master, is it I?" He fooled the disciples

but not Jesus. This is the height of hypocrisy and wickedness. He hid his evil intention with such pious innocence!

The next thing we learn is an important theological truth which is often misunderstood. Jesus said that the "Son of man goeth as it is written (as it was determined) of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed." There is a tension between the determinism (decree) of God and the responsibility of man. Jesus was referring to His betrayal and death. This had been determined by God. Judas was instrumental in fulfilling this plan and purpose of God. Some argue that Judas should be rewarded for his sinful action because his action brought the greatest spiritual benefits to all mankind. But Jesus clearly and plainly declared that although it is the determinate will of God that Jesus be betrayed and crucified, yet Judas who betrayed Him was himself responsible for his wicked action. Jesus remarked that it would be good if he had never been born. He is not to be rewarded but punished. It is God's will that Jesus died in order that many could be saved. That is God's will but it does not nullify or justify Judas' evil deed. All things work for good to them that love God and who are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28). But that does not mean that an evil deed is to be rewarded. Jesus was betrayed and He died by the hands of evil men, but because Jesus loved God and He was called according to God's purpose, the result was good for all people. Judas' action was evil and he

bore the full responsibility and penalty of his sin even though the result of his action worked for good, which is actually God who was working for good. God gets the glory and the men must face the penalty of their wicked deeds until they confess and repent.

The third thing is that Satan is able to enter into a person and lead him to commit sin and do the things that are anti-God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Judas was consumed with greed — money meant a lot to him. He sold the Lord for only thirty pieces of silver! His sin opened the way for Satan to influence his mind and heart. Satan is ever roaming the world to see whom he may devour or deceive or direct to do his bidding. This is a spiritual reality. Make no mistake about it. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

After Judas had left them, Jesus spoke of His glorification. It was a reference to His resurrection. God the Father would raise Him from the dead on the third day, and then He would ascend to Heaven's glory which He had before with God the Father. Jesus gave them a new commandment that they should love one another as He had loved them. He added, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." This love works in two ways. The disciples of Jesus must love one another. They must reciprocate each other's love. If one loves and the other does not respond alike, it is not complete. The world cannot know that we are His disciples.

### **Jesus Institutes the Lord's Supper**

In the midst of eating the Passover meal, Jesus took bread, blessed it, and gave thanks to God the Father for it. Then He broke it and gave it to His disciples, and said, "Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me." Then in the same way, He took the cup, gave thanks and gave it to His disciples, saying, "*Take this, and divide it among yourselves, drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament (this cup is the new testament in my blood), which is shed for many for the remission of sins: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.*" Then Jesus continued and said, "*I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.*"

Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper. There are three things to remember: it is a commemoration, a communion and a covenant.

It is a commemoration. Jesus commanded His disciples to perform this breaking of the bread and drinking of the cup as a remembrance of Him. The bread symbolizes His body and the cup symbolizes His shed blood for the remission of sins. The Roman Catholic Church teaches that in the Eucharist (that is the name for the Lord's Supper, it is derived from the Greek word *eucharisto*, which means to give thanks), the bread turns to Jesus' actual flesh, and the wine in the cup turns to Jesus' actual blood. This is the doctrine

called transubstantiation which the 16<sup>th</sup> Century Reformers denounced as heresy. The Eucharist is a spiritual act in the eating of His body and the drinking of His blood.

It is a communion. Jesus and His disciples all sat together and they partook of the bread and the cup together. There was and still is a spiritual communion among the disciples and believers today in the partaking of the Lord's Supper. We all belong to Him, all those who have received Him. This bonding together as a body of believers, indeed, as members of the kingdom of God, is made possible because of Jesus.

It is also a covenant. Jesus gave His life for us so that we might have life in Him. Only all those who have received Him can truly have this union with Him. Judas was excluded from this spiritual union because he rejected Jesus and did not belong to Him. The mere external participation of the Lord's Supper does not bring about any spiritual blessing. He had no part at all with Jesus and His covenant. The believer identifies himself with His Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in His death, burial and resurrection: his death to sin, his burial and resurrection to newness of life in Christ. In the Lord's Supper, the believer remembers the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ as a sacrifice for his sins. He proclaims the Lord's death for his sin. He portrays his faith in His resurrection and in His second coming (1 Corinthians 11:25-26). He

examines his heart and reconsecrate his life to love the LORD and to serve Him faithfully. This is the means of grace that Presbyterians understands. It is not toward salvation but reconsecration.<sup>2</sup>

### **Jesus Rebukes the Selfish Ambition of His Disciples**

After hearing Jesus' last concluding words that He would not eat and drink of the bread and the cup again but would do so anew in His Father's kingdom, the disciples began to argue who should be the greatest in the kingdom. How insensitive were they! Jesus had been telling them about His sorrow, His impending betrayal, suffering and death, and there they were striving among themselves about their status in the kingdom of God. What a shame!

However, Jesus was patient with them. He taught them that anyone of them who aspired to be the greatest in the kingdom, must be "as the younger" (or junior), and let him be he that serves rather than be served. From the human point of view, the one who sits to eat is greater than the one who waits and serves. Jesus told His disciples that He was like the one who served them. They had been with Jesus. They had shared with Him during His trials and

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<sup>2</sup> 1 Corinthians 11:25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. 26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

temptations. Jesus had appointed them to be His disciples, to be like Him, to serve others, just as God the Father had appointed Him. When God the Father glorifies Him, He would glorify them too for they would sit on thrones judging the children of Israel.

### **PRACTICAL VALUE**

In the beginning of His public ministry, Jesus declared that He came to fulfil the Law. He is the fulfilment of the Law. He is the true Passover, the Lamb of God who was slain for the salvation of the world from the bondage of sin and Satan; for all those who would believe and receive Him as their Lord and Saviour. Jesus died that you and I might have the cleansing of our sins and be delivered from the enslaving power of sin and Satan; and receive the gift of eternal blessings. Our natural response is to love Him and serve Him and do His will. Did not Jesus give thanks to God the Father and say that He came to do His Father's will? He has set an example for us. No errand or work should be too small or insignificant to do for the Lord. Peter and John, the two of the three disciples who were closest to Jesus, willingly obeyed the Lord and went into the city to make the necessary preparation for Passover. From Jesus' point of view, the disciple who serves is greater than the one who is served. Let every Christian, who serves in whatever capacity in the church, remember that he is serving the Lord Jesus Christ, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords. It is

no small privilege and honour to serve Him no matter how small or insignificant we might think of the work.

Whenever we partake of the Lord's Supper, we remember our Lord's death, resurrection and coming again. We must also remember that we are united together in Him and He with us. There is solidarity among us as brothers and sisters in Christ. While there are diversities in our service and spiritual gifts, we should always strive to maintain oneness of heart and spirit in the Lord. Jesus has set an example for us to love one another, to be humble, and to build one another up. The work of the Lord by the church would be outreaching and effectual if we sincerely and devotedly walk in His footsteps.

Finally, we learn to discern the fine line between God's will and man's responsibility. God's will in bringing about good results from evil does not mean that evil doers and their evil deeds be simply excused. While it is true that good may come out of the evil works of men, it happens if we love Him and are called according to His purpose. God in His sovereign will can turn evil for good for His glory and purpose. He did that in the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. But it does not nullify the sin of Judas and the people who crucified Him. If they had repented, they would be forgiven. If not, they face the wrath of God. Such people will be punished for their sins. Very often, some Christians overlook this part of the truth. Bad things that happen in the church should be resolved with



genuine transparency, honesty and integrity. They should not be swept under the carpet with the excuse that God permits them and that it has turned out for good. God is still displeased with the one who has not confessed and repented of his sins. This daily washing of the feet is a necessary spiritual exercise. Let us learn these precious lessons, and may God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ give us the grace, courage and peace to do His will and His name be glorified. AMEN

**DAILY READINGS & DISCUSSION  
QUESTIONS**

**Daily Readings**

**MONDAY:** Luke 22:7-18, Matthew 26:17-20, Mark 14:12-17

**TUESDAY:** John 13:1-20

**WEDNESDAY:** John 13:21-35, Matthew 26:21-25, Mark 14:18-21, Luke 22:21-23

**THURSDAY:** Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:19-20, 1 Corinthians 11:23-25

**FRIDAY:** Luke 22:24-30

**Discussion Questions**

1. What does the feast of the Passover commemorate? What is most important element in the feast?

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2. What important lesson did Jesus teach in response to Peter's interruptions?

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3. What further application did Jesus make of His action as an example to His followers?

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4. What evidence do you find that the eleven had not suspected Judas in any way? What light does it throw upon Judas, as to his outward behaviour?

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5. What was the new commandment that Jesus gave to His disciples before His departure?

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6. What meaning did Jesus give to the outward symbol of the bread?

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7. What meaning did Jesus give to the outward symbol of the cup?

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8. What behavioural traits does Jesus expect of His disciples that differ from those of unbelievers? What reasons does Jesus give for such behaviour?

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