

(John) 18 - the Light Expressing

by Alan Redpath

Jesus' humility and love are demonstrated through his washing of Peter's feet, showing the importance of daily cleansing for fellowship with Christ.

Duration: 45:01

Scripture: John 13:1-3, John 13:31-35, John 14:6, John 15:12-13, John 16:33 - 17:5, John 18:20

Topics: "John"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the structure of the Gospel of John, dividing it into three main parts: the revelation of God as life to the world, the revelation of God as light to the disciples, and the revelation of God as love to all. The focus of this sermon is on the second part, which is only recorded by John in chapters 13 to 17. The speaker emphasizes the significance of these chapters, considering them as holy ground. The sermon specifically focuses on the introduction to the light for the disciples, highlighting Jesus' act of washing their feet as an example of love and service that they should follow.

Transcript

Well, you're leading two goals to nil. Do you know what I mean by that? I'll tell you. What? You're two up.

We'll be a few more, however, and we'll see how we get on and catch you up. You are two up on me. You're absolutely blank.

I'm not surprised. Last time I mentioned, just quite gently, lovingly, this lecture begins at 10.55. You won that one. You won that one.

And today, you won this one too. That's two up. Well, I'll try and get a little of you the next time I have a lecture at this time.

I'll be here for 10.55. That's what it says on the board. Okay? It's great to have you back. We missed you.

We really did. We prayed for you every day, thought of you, and when I listened to you this morning, speaking at nine o'clock and where you'd been and all that, I just pictured it all. Isn't it colossal? Really, it pulls at your heartstrings.

Were any of you visiting in these high-rise apartments? Oh, that's the limit. Yeah. Those churches too.

I suppose it's a real strike against them to operate in these old churches, 200 years old, some of them. But remember, I mean, when they were built, it meant that everybody in the country, everywhere, had a local church. And the church and the minister, the whole life of the village and town and neighborhood centered around them.

At least the country was God-fearing in those days. But now, you have housing estates, there's not a church for miles. Bringing up a pagan country.

Tragic. Well, anyway, praise the Lord for all he's done. It was thrilling to hear what you said.

By the way, I put a list on that board, just back there. And we're starting rather late, I'm afraid. We're starting, my wife and I, having 20 of you, 21 of you, round every week.

And the first ones, first 20 on the list, wherever you come. On Wednesday night this week it is. Immediately after the second lecture, we give you refreshments and have a chat and share together and just fellowship.

I think you'll enjoy it. I hope you would. I hope you'll sign them on the list as soon as possible.

See you on Wednesday. Okay. Just a prayer.

Thank you, God, for sending Jesus. Thank you, Jesus, that you came. Holy Spirit, won't you teach me more about his lovely name.

For your name's sake, amen. Would you turn to John chapter 13 this morning? John 13. The test on John's gospel is two weeks today in the first hour, that is 9.30. The test will be set on chapters 1 through chapter 12.

We're taking now chapter 13 onwards, hoping to get through a bit of it, a good bit of it. We've got the rest of the gospel, but test questions will not be set on this portion. Test questions will be confined to the first 12 chapters.

Okay. Chapter 13. Very lovely chapter.

Let me just read it to you. Certainly to... Well, we'll see how we get on. Chapter 13, verse 1. Are you with me? Now, before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

And during supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper, laid aside his garments, girded himself with a towel. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded. He came to Simon Peter, and Peter said to him, Lord, do you wash my feet? Jesus answered him, What I am doing you do not know now, but afterward you will understand.

Peter said to him, You shall never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I do not wash you, you have no part in me. Simon Peter said to him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

Jesus said to him, He who has bathed does not need to wash except his feet, but he is clean all over, and you are clean, but not all of you. For he knew who was to betray him. That was why he said, You are not

all clean.

When he had washed their feet and taken his garments and resumed his place, he said to them, Do you know what I have done to you? You call me teacher and lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example that you also should do as I have done to you.

Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. I am not speaking of you all.

I know whom I have chosen. It is that the scripture may be fulfilled, He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me. I tell you this now before it takes place, that when it does take place, you may believe that I am he.

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who receives anyone whom I send receives me. But he who receives me receives him who sent me. When Jesus had thus spoken, he was troubled in spirit and testified, Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.

The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he spoke. One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved, was lying close to the breast of Jesus. So Simon Peter beckoned to him and said, Tell us who it is of whom he speaks.

So lying thus close to the breast of Jesus, he said to him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, It is he to whom I shall give this morsel when I have dipped it. So when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. Then after the morsel, Satan entered into him.

Jesus said to him, What you're doing to do, what you're going to do, do quickly. Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him. Some thought that because Judas had the money box.

Jesus was telling him, Buy what we need for the feast. Or that he should give something to the poor. So after receiving the morsel, he immediately went out.

And it was night. When he had gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of Man glorified, and in him God is glorified. If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and glorify him at once.

Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and as I said to the Jews, so now I say to you, where I am going, you cannot come. A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. Simon Peter said to him, Lord, where are you going? Jesus answered, Where I am going, you cannot follow me now, but you shall follow afterward. Peter said to him, Lord, why cannot I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.

Jesus answered, Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the cock will not crow till you have denied me three times. This is the word of the Lord. You have your outline with you, I hope.

Would you just look at it? I don't want to bore you with it, but I do want to be sure that we're with each other, and you have that outline, and you follow the place where we are. Now, I've divided the gospel into three parts, main parts. You'll see that on the outline.

The first part, the revelation of God as life to the world, chapter 1 through 12. The second part, the revelation of God as light to the disciples, chapter 13 to 17. And the third part, the revelation of God as love to all, chapter 18 through 20.

And then chapter 21 is the epilogue. Now, you've all got that, right? Now, as we look at, commence part B, the second part, it's, remember I said to you last lecture, it's only John who records these events in chapter 13 through 17. I really find it hard to lecture on them, because you're really on holy ground here.

It's only John who records 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, those chapters, and the events in them. And notice also that in our outline, this part B is divided in three sections. Introduction to the light for them, 13, 1 through 30, that's what we're looking at this morning.

And the second part, impartation of the light to them, chapter 13, 31, to the end of chapter 16. And then intercession for the light in them, chapter 17. Those are all on your outline.

And then consider this morning, introduction to the light for them in chapter 13, 1 through 30. And you notice first we have in verses 1 through 20, the light expressing love. And then the light exposing hate.

The light expressing love, chapter 1 through 20, verse 1 through 20, and the light exposing hate, verses 21 through 30. Now we look specifically at the light expressing love. I don't know if you caught the atmosphere of this chapter as it began, but it seems to me that during that journey from Bethany to Jerusalem, Jesus was absorbed in deep thought.

You'd almost think in reading verse 3 that the cross didn't matter. It was of no concern. Just read those three verses.

Just think into them. Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart after this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. And during supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hand, that he had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper, laid aside his garments and girded himself with a towel.

Just somehow the cross was hidden in that. There didn't seem to be any concern at that moment. Because he had a greater concern.

A much greater concern. Because a contention had arisen among the disciples as to who was to be the greatest. That was Jesus' concern.

A contention had arisen among the twelve as to who should be the greatest. You get that in Luke 22, 24 and Mark chapter 9, 34. Luke 22, 24.

Mark chapter 9, 34. Got it? The contention about who is to be the greatest among us. How this must have concerned Jesus.

He forgot about the cross, the agony, the suffering that he knew he was confronted with. He forgot about all that in this great concern for these disciples. After all, of what use was his teaching and example and prayer and love? These men were no different.

What's the use of it all? No different. You see, they were going to be entrusted with a world task. A world task.

And the Holy Spirit was indispensable for that task. Absolutely indispensable. And he couldn't be given at all until they'd been delivered from their pride.

Now, I'll just go over that again because it's also relevant to us. What's the good of the teaching, praying, example of Jesus when he makes no difference to our lifestyle? They were just the same. Proud, self-centered.

Who's going to be the greatest? And yet, these were the men whom Jesus had chosen and were going to continue his ministry throughout the world. A world task. And it couldn't be done without the Holy Spirit.

And the Holy Spirit could never come into lives that are self-centered. Oh my, what an important moment this was in the life of Jesus. He was conscious of his redemptive work.

He was linked with the throne of God. And he loved these people, these fellows, loved them intensely. Loved them to the end.

Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. Yet, he's so aware of the unfitness and lack of preparation for all that confronted him. He's so aware of it.

How can they learn the lesson? How can they learn? They won't learn. The important thing is he was not simply they might know the way of deliverance and cleansing, but they should be willing for it. Not simply know it as a theory, as a fact, as a doctrine.

But they should be willing for it. Read verses 3 and 5, 3 to 5. Jesus just noticed the things that he knew about himself. The things, four things that he knew about himself.

Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hand, that's one thing. He had come from God, that's two things. That he was going to God, that's three things.

Rose from supper, laid aside his garment, and girt himself with a towel. And now the interest in this story, in this portion, suddenly focuses on one man. It shifts from the twelve disciples to one man.

I know how many times that I've read this portion and thought about it. The Holy Spirit has focused on me. What do I find about Peter here? Simon Peter.

The first thing I see about him is he had defiled feet. Put that down in your notes. He had defiled feet.

The dust of the highway, as it came to that house, the dust of the highway was only a picture of an inner defilement in his heart. Someday, I'm sure, you'll be doing character studies. One of the most fascinating things of the Bible, really.

Think of this man, Simon Peter. He was a leader, a born leader. He got the girl and, you know, oomph.

He was a born leader. He couldn't remain unnoticed. He'd never be in the background.

He'd always be somewhere in the front, pushing himself. He often acted as spokesman for the disciples, opening his mouth and very often putting his foot in it. Yet this man was defiled.

Of course, it was shared by the others as well because all of them had been guilty of this who shall be greatest, their pride. And you know, you think into that Doesn't it shock you sometimes to discover how much you and I are defiled with the same thing? How pride touches almost every relationship in life. The

Lord Jesus was full of grace and truth, John 1, 14.

So often you and I proclaim the truth but it lacks authority because there isn't much grace with it. It lacks authority because there isn't much grace. There's not much tenderness, not much compassion, not much care, not much love.

Full of truth. And so, people don't respond because they are so unattractive. We serve the Lord with defiled feet.

Simon Peter here was a man with a defiant heart. Defiant heart. Can you imagine the embarrassment of the disciples as the Lord stooped to wash their feet? See, in the east a guest would bath before going out for a meal.

So, when he arrived only his feet needed washing. With the dirt and dust of the highway. This is similar today with our doormat.

Only his feet needed washing. Can you imagine the embarrassment of the disciples how great the Lord is. Jesus, knowing the Father had given all things into his hands and they had come from God, was going to God, rose from supper, laid aside his garments, girded himself with a towel, then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded.

Four things he knew about himself. Four tremendous things we noticed. How great he is.

But oh my, how humble he is. In the beginning of the Bible, in the beginning in Genesis chapter 3, man wanted to be a god. Like God.

In the end, Jesus became, God became a servant. He took a towel and washed the feet of his disciples. A slave.

I can imagine a sort of embarrassed silence as the others all watched what was going on. Suddenly, the silence is broken. Verse 6. He came to Simon Peter and Peter said to him, Lord, do you wash my feet? Jesus answered, What I am doing you do not know now, but afterward you will understand.

I think Peter had a job to get those words out. He was all choked with emotion. Do you wash my feet? And then the quiet tone of Jesus, What I do now you don't know, but after you will understand.

And then suddenly, with a burst, you will never wash my feet. It's a very dangerous thing to say never to Jesus. Very.

Have you ever said it? Concerning his will for you? I have. Have you ever been resentful to a preacher because you felt he stopped preaching and begun fiddling? Do you know what I mean? He doesn't seem to be preaching the word, but he's begun fiddling, getting into your heart. And you've resented it.

That moment you were very defiant. Because if I echo Peter's refusal, I run the risk that Peter ran. Put that down, would you? Just that one sentence.

If I echo Peter's refusal, that is, saying never to Jesus, I must run the risk he ran. And what was that risk? Verse 8, second part. If I do not wash you, you have no part in me.

Let's be sure we're not getting off the track, theologically. I may still be a Christian when I say no to Jesus. I can still be a Christian.

But I have no part in the living Christ. I'm not sharing his burden. Not reflecting his love.

Not living in the power of the Spirit. I'll just repeat that. If I'm echoing Peter's refusal, verse 8, then I'll still be a Christian, but have no part in the living Lord.

Not sharing his burden. Not reflecting his love. Not living in the power of the Spirit.

Christ had been looking up, looking at Peter's defiled feet. But now I see him with towel in hand, kneeling, please, kneeling at Simon's feet. And looking up to his face.

If I wash thee not, you've no part in me. And you notice Peter's typical, typical answer. If I do not wash you, you've no part in me, Peter said, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

Lord, spare me that, for heaven's sake. Not only my feet, but just a complete bath. That thought, which I have just put to you, broke his heart.

The sheer horror of finding himself at the end of his life, just getting to heaven by the skin of his teeth. Getting in through the back door ashamed of himself. Not having had any fellowship with Jesus.

Not having shared his burden. Not having shared his love. Not having shared his compassion.

Yet born again, put this down, a man with defiled feet, a man with defiant heart, and also a man with a desperate cry. He, he had begun by, this is the bit I want you to get at, begun by refusing the indispensable. Long word? Refusing the essential, if you like.

The necessary. He'd begun by refusing the indispensable. Now he sought the unnecessary.

Not my feet only, but all of me. Let's get our theology straight. And I'll go very, very slow.

You must get down this two sentences. Ready? We are cleansed from sin because we are justified by faith. We are cleansed from sin because we are justified by faith.

We are clean in God's sight because we are covered by the blood of Jesus. Got that? Okay? Again? Sorry. Righty-o.

Here we come. Remember the first statement. Peter had begun by refusing the indispensable.

Now he sought the unnecessary. We are cleansed from sin because we are justified by faith. We are clean in God's sight because we are covered by the blood of Jesus.

But, without a daily cleansing, we're defiled. Without a daily cleansing repeating, we are defiled and have no living experience of the Lord Jesus or no part in Him. Without a daily cleansing repeating, we are defiled.

Without that, we have no living experience of Christ, no part in Him. That thought broke Peter. Broke him.

To have no part with Jesus after having had such a part. No part with Christ after being the leader of the twelve disciples. No part with Christ after having said, Thou art the Son of the living God.

No part with Christ. That thought broke him. To be shut out from fellowship while others are shut in.

He couldn't stand it. The thing that really gets to me in this is this. Many times I've been to meetings.

I'm sure you have too. And the preacher has been used of God to bring me right to the feet of Jesus. I'm sure you know what I mean by that.

It's been for real. Right to the feet of Christ. But here, in John 13, is a wonderful picture of Jesus kneeling at the feet of Simon.

Kneeling at Peter's feet. Towel in hand. Looking into his face.

And saying, If I don't wash you, you have no part in me. That's tremendous. Tremendous.

Then, then, he had a towel. But much more was needed to cleanse us. And the much more is in Philippians 2. Verses 6 through 8. How it is not a thing to be grasped after, to be equal with God.

But humbled himself. Nobody else could do it for him, of course. Humbled himself.

Made himself of no reputation. Took upon him the form of a servant. Made in the likeness of a man, beaten unto death.

That's what it took. In verses 12 through 17, the Lord gives a message, explaining his action picture. When he had washed their feet and taken his garments and resumed his place, he said to them, Do you know what I have done to you? You call me teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am.

If I then, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is he who is sent greater than he sent him.

If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. Do you know what I have done, he said? If I, your Lord and teacher, have given you an example that you should do as I have done. And finally, the onus placed on the disciple.

Blessed are you if you do them. See, get it. Jesus, the light of the world, has expressed his love for his people.

This is light expressing love as in our outline. I have to ask myself and you, how do I show love to Jesus and love to my fellow Christians? Let me say this. Clean hands and a pure heart are necessary for heaven.

But I'll tell you something, dirty hands and a hot heart are necessary for the world. Got it? I'll give it to you again. Clean hands and a pure heart, oh yes, necessary for heaven.

But dirty hands and a warm loving heart, necessary for earth. Got it? Slow down. Ready.

Coming again. Clean hands and a pure heart are necessary for heaven. But dirty hands and a warm loving heart are necessary for earth.

Got it? Dirty hands, getting your hands dirty, for Jesus' sake, and a warm heart, a hot heart, a blazing heart, a loving heart, anything you like like that, are necessary when you're down on earth. You see, the

fact that that isn't so, let me just suggest something to you, you'll probably kick me out the room. Only five out of every 4,000 Christians have the least interest in missions overseas in this country.

Only five out of 4,000. The average giving in this country of every Christian to mission overseas is 15 pence a week. Clean hands and pure heart, oh, necessary for heaven.

But dirty hands and a warm loving heart, necessary for earth. You go home and pray about it? I shouldn't. You should get on your feet and get cracking.

The number of times at missionary meetings I've made an appeal for people responding to the Lord's will and the Lord's service and go overseas, and crowds have stood up, go back to the same church six minutes later, still there, stood up and stood down again. What's the good of that? Don't get a move on, not one blooming inch. Excuse me.

Excuse me. I'm just as cross with myself because I can't do anything about it now. I could have done, but I didn't do.

Just look at the conversations which followed. Light, light, expressing love. And look at the conversations which followed.

At the supper table. Starting really in verse 18, you notice that in verse 12, Jesus had taken his seat. Saddam.

And what he said is recorded in verses 12 through 17, what I've been reading to you. It's really a lesson, of course, in the self-sacrifice of love. That's what it is.

And in verse 18, do you notice this? He tells them there's a break in the circle of fellowship. Before it becomes evident, he speaks of it there, so that later on they may think of him in the light of that forecast. Verses 18 to 20.

I tell you this now before it takes place, that when it does take place, you may believe that I am he. Truly, truly, I say to you, he who receives anyone whom I send receives me, and who receives me receives him who sends me. Now there's a dark cloud over the supper table, and Jesus speaks of betrayal.

And you notice in verses 21 through 26, in answer to a question put by John at Peter's suggestion, the charge is brought very close. Do you notice that? One of the disciples, verse 23, whom Jesus loved, was lying close to the breast of Jesus. So son Peter beckoned to him and said, Tell us who it is of whom he speaks.

So lying close to the breast of Jesus, he said to him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, It is he to whom I shall give this morsel when I have dipped it. So when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Sam the Scab. You know that in the supper, it was always the privilege of the host to give a special choice piece of what was there to a special friend.

And the Lord gave that piece to Judas. That was the last opportunity of repentance. The last opportunity.

He gave the choice piece to the man he knew was going to betray him. Just handing it to him. What an opportunity.

We're told the disciples did not know why Judas left the table. I've said before and I say again, he's an absolute enigma. I don't understand him.

He didn't partake of the Lord's supper. He'd gone out before it started. And when Judas went out, verse 30, it was night.

I should think so. It always is night when you go away from Christ. Always.

Because he is light. And Judas has never come back from the darkness. The light exposing hate.

We'll pause there with a prayer. Lord, let's all be sure each of us we're on the right side. Let's be among those who are willing to get our hands dirty for your sake.

And make our hearts take fire for you. That the love of God may be shed abroad in them by the Holy Spirit. We ask it for your name's sake.

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