

Maundy Thursday

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[0:00] When we think of the man Judas, we think of the ultimate betrayer. Judas was definitely driven by greed and money, while outwardly displaying a sense of devotion to the mission of our Lord.

Therefore, Judas is the ultimate villain in the history of the church. He was the poster child for being an extreme hypocrite, living a double life and then selling out our Lord for 30 pieces of silver. But what strikes home in our gospel reading this evening from John chapter 13 are those words about our Lord. It says, Notice that our text does not say he loved all of them except Judas. No, Judas was also loved, even though he had been overcome and possessed by the devil to betray our Lord. Jesus loved Judas.

That probably strikes us as odd. But what's even more strange is what our Lord does next. We read, Think about that for a moment.

[1:57] The God who created the world. The God who sustains the world. The God who controls all things is now allowing himself to be betrayed by a kiss.

And yet this same God who governs the universe stoops down in love and he washes the feet of his betrayer. Judas. One of the very important ways we are to read the Bible is we are to place ourselves in the story of the text.

In other words, In other words, We are not to read scripture as merely an observer or spectator in order to simply gain enough information so that we can then go out and argue and debate with others.

That's not the way we are to read scripture. We are to read imagining ourselves in the very story itself. So let me ask a couple of questions this evening.

First, How would you treat someone who you knew was going to betray you? I dare say that most of us would not love that person and we would not show such grace as to wash that person's feet.

[3:20] The second question is a bit harder and that is, How are we often like Judas? Yes, We may not seek to sell our souls for 30 pieces of silver, but are we willing to follow Jesus?

Even if it goes against everything the world says that we should be chasing. The world says, Live it up. Cater to yourself. You only go around once.

It's the very creed that motivated Judas. And what most Americans believe is the dream to fulfill in one's own lifetime. I think that we have to be honest and say there are times when we are more like Judas than we care to admit.

And yet, Jesus loves us to the end. Today, he does not wash our feet because he has already washed us in the waters of holy baptism, where he has claimed us.

And he stoops down and he feeds us this evening with his very own body and blood. And he calls us to commune with him so that we might be transformed and therefore imitate him.

[4:43] He calls us to love him. And in eating his flesh and drinking his blood, he loves us. He calls us to love him by showing grace and humility to others.

Therefore, we are to practice love. We are called to be generous. We are called to serve. And we are called to love and to live like Christ.

And we are to realize that we lack nothing because in Christ we have everything. We have life. Eternal life.

Money cannot buy what Christ freely offers. And that was the problem of Judas. Money cannot buy what Christ freely offers as he lays down his own life for us.

Sinners. Sinners who oftentimes betray our faith and act like Judas. Therefore, our Lord invites us washed and baptized children who belong to him.

[6:00] He invites us to come and to receive his love this evening. He calls us to participate in this holy meal that he instituted on this holy night because he loves us to the very end.

Our Lord's sorrowful passion, his deep anguish, and his death upon the cross is his sacrificial love for each and every one of you as it is for the whole world.

Amen. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.