

Exposing a Traitor
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John 13:18-30
August 10, 2014

Please turn with me in your Bibles to the 13th chapter of John, John 13. We noted in previous messages that we are looking at what is often called '*The Farewell Discourse*', or '*The Upper Room Discourse*', from John 13-17, these five chapters. We have, in a sense, the last words of Jesus before His crucifixion. There were post-resurrection appearances in which He added instructions to the disciples, but this is a very significant time in His life and ministry, but they don't know what's going on. They don't have any idea that this is the night before His crucifixion. We are going to see in the passage we're looking at today, we're going to be looking at Verses 18-30, the title of the message is '*Exposing the Traitor*'.

We come to the section of Scripture into this upper room time where Jesus exposes a sinister plot, He unmasks this diabolical scheme to betray Him. In doing so, He prepares the hearts of His people, the hearts of His disciples, for really a storm that is gathering. Not unlike the kind of preparations that need to be made before a serious, physical storm comes in. Something we saw, just the power of storms, last year, Moore, Oklahoma, a devastating tornado that struck there. Two hundred and ten mile an hour winds, maximum winds of 210 miles per hour. A hurricane is 70. I mean, this was a tornado, but 210. It was on the ground for a stretch of 17 miles, it stayed on the ground, and it was about a mile wide swath. That kind of storm came through. It was amazing though only 24 people died. Only 377 were injured, given that it was a suburb of Oklahoma City. What was it that helped save so many lives? Well it was the advanced warning system. The Lord has blessed us immensely in recent years to have more and more technology that helps us prepare for storms, and wisdom about how to prepare for the storm, and that illustrates the fact that if you know how to prepare for a storm it makes a big difference how you come through.

The Lord, in His word, and in this passage in particular, His word in general, but this passage in particular is helping us to prepare for the storms that come into our lives. They can be personal storms of suffering, things that come out of the blue that we don't see coming, and yet the Lord has told us they are going to happen. In reality we know they are going to happen, we know that we're all going to die. We know that the people that we love are going to die one day, and yet sometimes it can come so suddenly, can't it? Accidents that happen, tragic circumstances,

broken relationships—there are all kinds of storms that can impact our lives. Then we look, how do you prepare for that? This passage speaks to that.

We look at the gathering storm clouds in our culture. We see what looks like a cultural storm growing, brewing, immorality and just increasing blindness of the culture. Darkness is coming, we feel it, and you can look at it, and get discouraged, and that intellectual, and moral decline is rooted in the spiritual, in spiritual darkness that is spreading over the land. The storm is coming, or it seems that it may be coming. How do you prepare? Well this passage is going to help us to see that because the disciples were about to enter into the vortex of the most amazing storm that has ever hit the world. It wasn't a physical storm, it was a spiritual storm, and nothing like it has happened before or since. This storm is the unleashing of evil, and the experience of it, that only can be approximated by what people experience in the final judgment in hell because in this storm that is about to happen, God is going to pull back His hand, and evil is going to be vented with all its fury, with all its terrible rage against the Son of God, and the people of God, the disciples, the 11, who are faithful, who believe, are going to be caught up in that.

How can they possibly make it through? Well Jesus is preparing them. In a sense, He is telling them to hunker down, and to batten down the hatches because the storm is coming. That is what *'The Upper Room Discourse'* is about. But in particular, this incident of exposing the sinister and evil plot, orchestrated by Satan himself, carried out by Judas, one of His own beloved disciples. In exposing the plot, He prepares them by not only telling them it is going to happen, I mean, He basically says, "I'm about to be betrayed. The storm is coming," but in the way that He exposes it, He doesn't just, it's not just an advanced warning system, it is the key to triumph because what He demonstrates is the storm is coming, and Jesus is demonstrating, "I am sovereign over the storm. You are going to see Me apparently caught up in the middle of it Myself, the fury of all evil is going to come against Me. I'm going to be humbled in an unspeakable way that the foot-washing typified," as we saw in recent weeks. "But in reality, when you see that happening, know that I am in charge, on the cross, at that moment," which really gets to the key of how we go through the storm is that we are to understand who Jesus is in the midst of the storm. Let's read these verses, John 13:18-30. He has just finished telling them that they are to follow His example and the foot-washing, and now He says, at Verse 18:

John 13:18-30 ~ I do not speak of all of you. I know the ones I have chosen; but it is that the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'HE WHO EATS MY BREAD HAS LIFTED UP HIS HEEL AGAINST ME.' 19 From now on I am telling you before it comes to pass, so that when it does occur, you may believe that I am He. 20 Truly, truly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me."

*21 When Jesus had said this, He became troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, that one of you will betray Me." 22 The disciples began looking at one another, at a loss to know of which one He was speaking. 23 There was reclining on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. 24 So Simon Peter *gestured to him, and *said to him, "Tell us who it is of whom He is speaking." 25 He, leaning back thus on Jesus' bosom, *said to Him, "Lord, who is it?" 26 Jesus then *answered, "That is the one for whom I shall dip the morsel and give it to him." So when He had dipped the morsel, He *took and *gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. 27 After the morsel, Satan then entered into him. Therefore Jesus *said to him, "What you do, do quickly." 28 Now no one of those reclining at the table knew for what purpose He had said this to him. 29 For some were supposing, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus was saying to him, "Buy the things we have need of for the feast"; or else, that he should give something to the poor. 30 So after receiving the morsel he went out immediately; and it was night.*

Let's pray together.

Father, we ask that the Spirit that inspired these words might now illuminate them. That You might grant us eyes to see, and ears to hear, and that You might change us by the power of Your word for the glory of Your name, Amen.

I want us to consider this passage under two points, and the two points are, we are going to spend most of the time on the second point, but the two points are: 'Exposing the Traitor' and 'Exalting the Savior', because ironically what happens is that as Jesus exposes the plot, this really should be a downer, this should be a discouraging time, and of course it really is for the disciples, they are bewildered. They don't even know until later, afterwards they look back and they say, "Wow!" Because what should have been, Satan was trying to detract from Jesus. Satan had chosen one of His 12 disciples, closest to Him, and was working in his heart to entice him to do this wicked thing. We're going to see we have in this passage an example of full Satanic possession. Satan entered into him, when he yields himself to evil, Satan enters into him, and this wicked, evil plot is carried out. There would

have been some who were prone when they heard about the message of Jesus, especially some early readers of the Gospels, “How could it be that Jesus chose one who would then become His own murderer? Did Jesus make a mistake? What does this say about Him? Was He the victim? Was He the hapless victim?” What we see in the passage is, “No, not at all.” This is what John is wanting his readers to understand. Jesus is not the victim, He is, even in this moment, the victor. He is not the one to whom things are happening. He is the one who is orchestrating the things that are happening. This is an amazing reality and we’re going to look at this under those two headings—‘*Exposing the Traitor*’, ‘*Exalting the Savior*’.

1) Exposing the Traitor:

Verse 18, Jesus just said, “You are blessed, you are happy, you have God’s blessing upon you if you do these things, but some of you aren’t blessed. One of you is not. I did not speak of all of you, I know the ones that I have chosen, but it is that the Scripture may be fulfilled. He who eats my bread has lifted up his heel against Me.” He says, “Listen, one of you has lifted up your heel against me.” In Middle-eastern culture, to show someone your heel itself is a mark of extreme disrespect and dishonor, to put your foot up against someone. He said, “One of you,” and He quotes Psalm 41:9, “One of you who ate My bread has lifted up his heel against Me.” This in itself troubles Jesus. Verse 21, ...***When Jesus had said this, He became troubled in spirit***,... Something we run into a couple of different times in John’s Gospel. We were told in John 11, at the tomb when Jesus came to Mary, and she was weeping, and the Jews with her, Jesus was troubled in His spirit. He was in anguish. The idea is to be thrown into a state of agitation, mentally and emotionally. Jesus is affected by the circumstance. This is the miracle, we have the God-man before us. We have on the one hand the one we’re going to see is the great I AM, that is what Verse 19 tells us, “That you may believe that I am...” The New American Standard italicizes ‘*He*’ because ‘*He*’ is not in the text. It says literally, “That you may believe that I am.” He is going to demonstrate His glory and yet at the same time the I AM is also a man who shares our flesh, and our blood, and who understands what it is to be a man. He is troubled. The fact that His own disciple is betraying Him, even though He has known it all along, John has been careful to tell us that.

In fact, it is interesting, all the Gospel-writers do that, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, when you see them introduce the disciples in the early parts of their Gospels, they list them out, you know? When they list the disciples, He chose these, every time, “Judas, the one who would betray Him.” And John has told us, in Chapter 6 and Verse 71, Jesus said, “One of you is a devil. I chose you, but yet one of you is a devil,” “...for He knew He was speaking of Judas Iscariot,” John told us. Chapter

13, Verse 2, when He was getting ready to wash their feet, we are told that Satan had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray Him. Verse 11, during that same account of the foot-washing He said, “You were clean, but not all of you,” John tells us, “...for He knew the one who was betraying Him.” He knows the one who is betraying Him and we see it illustrated graphically for us as the drama unfolds.

He was troubled in spirit and testified, in fact, that is a powerful word there. ‘*Testified*’ has this solemn testimony. He testifies, and He says, “Truly, truly I say to you, one of you will betray Me.” You can hear the anguish in the Savior’s voice, and then what unfolds is this drama. We have on the one hand kind of a mystery, the unveiling of a mystery, and the solving of the mystery. Jesus solves it and the disciples don’t have a clue. It’s like they’ve watched the story, and they just didn’t even understand what they watched. But the way John tells it, as he writes this under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he wants the reader to be caught up into the drama. Do you remember how I mentioned, when we were looking at the foot-washing, how he used the dramatic present? And if you have a New American Standard, some of the other translations will clue you in. They translate a verb in the past tense because it is just the way we talk in English, but that in the Greek it was really a present tense verb. I don’t know why they don’t do that, because we really do this sometimes in English as well. We use the dramatic present.

I mentioned this before, that if you tell someone a story, and you say, “I went somewhere, and I did this, and it was fun.” That is all past tense. But if, “I went somewhere. I went to Stone Mountain and we were climbing the mountain. And as we were climbing up we saw some people we knew.” This is such a bad story. I didn’t plan out my story ahead of time, but it was so exciting that I want to tell you in the present. “We were walking up the hill,” you see ‘*We were walking*’, “and I look over...” It wasn’t, ‘*I looked*’, “I look over,” and it engages you to almost be walking with me, and look, John does this again and again in this particular event. He does it here, as Jesus exposes the traitor. You begin to see it in Verse 21, He starts in showing the continuous action. Jesus has just said:

John 13:21 ~ ...“Truly, truly, I say to you, that one of you will betray Me.”

He has dropped the bomb with the most clarity He ever has to this point. “One of you, truly, truly, listen to Me, one of you will betray Me.”

John 13:22 ~ The disciples began looking at one another,...

This is a past tense, but one that implies continuous action, ongoing action. Really, “They were looking at one another,” is a better translation. The disciples are looking at one another, and then it says:

John 13:22 ~ ...at a loss to know of which one He was speaking.

In the Greek it means really *'being perplexed'* is a better translation. It is a verb. *'At a loss to know'* is the verb *'being perplexed'*. They were in a state of present tense complexity, perplexity. They are confused, they are being confused, they are looking around. The idea is they are looking around stupefied. I mean, can you imagine? "One of you will betray Me." That should have been stupefying to them. They didn't have low opinions of Judas at this point. Judas seemed to be exemplary. He was the one that was always enthusiastic too, not quite as much as Peter, but he was close. Then he continues:

John 13:23-24 ~ There was reclining on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. 24 So Simon Peter *gestured to him, and *said to him,...

Really it says, literally, "So Simon Peter gestures to Him, and says to Him, and he leans back and says," not *'said'*, "says to the Lord, 'Lord, who is it?'" Then Jesus answers:

John 13:26 ~ "That is the one for whom I shall dip the morsel and give it to him." So when He had dipped the morsel,...

He takes it, and He gives it to Judas, and then Jesus in Verse 27 says to him, it is all in the dramatic present. He wants you to see it happening as it unfolds, and what is happening is, this solving of this, this exposing of a mystery, and then the fingering of the culprit. In it what we see is that Jesus, He knows who is betraying Him, but the disciples don't. The only one of the disciples that knows is Judas and we see in this the horror and ugliness of evil. Judas lifts up his heel against Jesus, "And he who eats My bread has lifted up his heel," that is from Psalm 41:9, David is writing in Psalm 41, as we see in the Old Testament, David was a type of Christ, and David experienced things, not things identical of course to Jesus, but similar.

He was betrayed by those who loved him. I mean, his own son led a revolt against him, Absalom. His former advisor, Ahithophel, joined Absalom against him. The rabbinic writers think that this is talking about Ahithophel, his former advisor who becomes so against him he is telling Absalom, "You've got to kill David. What you've got to do before you kill him is go sleep with his concubines. Show your utter disdain for him, and then go search him out. Give me 12,000 men. I'm going to go kill him." Ahithophel had been David's friend, had been his advisor who had sat at his own table. Judas is, in the same way, one of His close, close friends that He has shared His life with, He shared His heart with. He has just washed Judas' feet and Judas betrays Him. The traitor is exposed and the scene ends with the phrase *'it was night'*. I think John is doing more than just telling us chronologically

what time it was. He is saying, “Judas went out immediately and it was night. Judas is going out into utter darkness. He has left the Savior, he has been in the presence of the Savior, and look what he had happen to him, Jesus gave him bread.”

This is significant, it’s not like, we don’t do this so it’s not really something we can relate to that well. We don’t tear bread and give it to anybody except our little kids maybe, right? But it was customary for a host of a banquet to not only just tear bread, he might tear the meat. You know? To cut a piece of meat, to dip it, and to hand it as a sign of friendship, and honor to a special guest. So when He says, “The one I will dip the morsel,” He is dipping the morsel and He is giving it to Judas. He is reaching out to Judas one last time saying, “Judas, I love you.” And what Judas does in response is to give himself more completely to evil. He basically rejects Jesus with all of his heart. Jesus is revealing His goodness, and His kindness, and His love, and Judas confirms that he never has been one who loved Jesus, and he has hated Him from the beginning, and his hatred becomes complete. People have speculated about Judas’ motives. He was a zealot, he probably didn’t want Jesus to do more militarily. Probably those are all reasonable things, but he did not want a Savior like Jesus, and he hated what Jesus really stood for. So evil is demonstrated in its ugliest form, exposing the traitor, and Jesus exposes him clearly. He gives the morsel to him and shows He is the one but the disciples don’t know it.

2) Exalting the Savior:

Now ‘*Exalting the Savior*’, here is where we want to spend some time. I said earlier, this could be seen, possibly be a moment where Jesus is diminished in people’s eyes. “Did He not know? How did He get blindsided by Judas?” What the text makes clear, John makes clear in this passage is, this actually: Jesus telling them ahead of time is one of the ways Jesus proves that He is God. In fact, I think you see four different attributes of Jesus that are attributes of God in this passage. This second point, ‘*Exalting the Savior*’, has four sub-points.

A) The Knowledge of Jesus:

The first thing is you see the knowledge of Jesus. You see that the knowledge of Jesus is the knowledge of God. That He is omniscient, Jesus is omniscient. The drama set before us, this mystery, what you have is this contrast between Jesus and the disciples. It is like a mystery, it is like one you read in a book, and the clever detective knows what nobody else knows. This is off the charts that way. The disciples, who are people who have been chosen by Jesus, they know Him, they love Him. They’ve become His true followers, the eleven now, and yet they’re completely in the dark, but look how clear it is to Jesus. The contrast is made clear.

They are in a perpetual state of perplexity. They were at a loss to know which one He was speaking about. They're sitting there dumbfounded, looking at one another, and even Peter has nothing to say. Now, he does come and he does something, but he has nothing to say to Jesus in response to this.

In fact, the word *being perplexed* really means to not know what to say, to not know what to do, to not know what to think. And they are in a present tense. Remember present just doesn't mean the present time. The present tense is used to emphasize continuous action. They are in a state of continual perplexity. They are dumbfounded. They had no idea, and Jesus contrasts His knowledge. He told them in Verse 18:

John 13:18 ~ I do not speak of all of you. I know the ones I have chosen;

"I know every one of you." The word translated as *know* there is the word εἶδω (eidō), which means fullness of knowledge. "I have perfect knowledge of every one of you, even Judas, perfect knowledge of every one of you. But why did I choose Judas? I chose Judas so that the Scripture may be fulfilled. I did it because I know My will, I know you, and I am working My plan."

He testified in Verse 21. I mentioned that word a moment ago, a solemn testimony. It means to testify to that which you know to be true, that which you have seen, that which you have heard, that which you know to be true. "I testify to you one of you will betray Me, and I know the one." And then also there's an interesting thing that He does in the passage. It doesn't show up in the English as well as it does in the Greek. There are three times in John 13 that He uses the word *that one*, and it's kind of unusual. First of all in Verse 26, when they ask Him, "Lord, who is it?" Jesus then answered, "That one..." It doesn't read it that way in English. It says, "That is the one..."

John 13:26 ~ Jesus then *answered, "That is the one for whom I shall dip the morsel and give it to him."

That one, and then in Verse 27:

John 13:27 ~ After the morsel, Satan then entered into him.

In the Greek, *him* is translated *that one*. Satan entered into *that one*. Then in Verse 30:

John 13:30 ~ So after receiving the morsel he went out immediately; and it was night.

Literally in the Greek it says *that one* went out immediately. I think John's reminding us, *that one*, he's pointing the finger, pointing the finger, pointing the finger, and the idea is Jesus knows all along, "That one, that is the one, that is the one." There's no doubt. It's not like He's saying, "It's one of you two or three guys. I've been watching y'all. I don't like the way you look at Me." No, He knows everything about Judas. He has perfect knowledge, and because of His perfect knowledge, His omniscience itself testifies that He is God. That's what He says in Verse 19. After He told them, "Listen, I know the ones I have chosen, and the reason I chose Judas is that the Scripture may be fulfilled," look at Verse 19:

John 13:19 ~ From now on I am telling you before it comes to pass, so that when it does occur, you may believe that I am He.

"I'm telling you ahead of time what's about to happen so that when it happens, you will know who I am, and I am that I am." As we've gone through John's Gospel, we've seen that John focused in on this aspect of Jesus' teaching ministry in a way that none of the other apostles did. He focused in on the '*I am*' sayings of Jesus, and the '*I am*' sayings of Jesus are rooted in the Old Testament. In Exodus 3:14, where Moses asked the Lord, remember when he was at the burning bush and the Lord told him to go to Pharaoh and to deliver the people? "Go to the people and tell them you're going to deliver them." And he says, "When I go, who shall I tell them sent me? Tell me Your Name." Basically he's saying. "Who are You, oh God, speaking to me in this bush?" And the Lord says to him, "I am that I am. Therefore, you shall say to them, '*I am* has sent you.'"

In the Hebrew, *I am* is very close to the phrase for Yahweh. Yahweh is actually a form of the verb *I am*. It's actually the third person singular. '*He is*' is what it really looks like, but the idea is the association is, "You tell them *I am* sent me, because Yahweh, my Name, means *I am*. I'm the self-existent one. Everything else is dependent upon something. I alone am independent. Everything else exists because I am." What we see in Jesus' teaching ministry is that He's used this *I am* phrase, in the Greek: ἐγώ εἰμι (ego eimi). Our word ego comes from that. Ego, I am.

He said, "I am the bread of life," in John 6:35. He said, "I am the Light of the world," in John 8:12. He said, "I am the door to the sheepfold," in John 10:7. He said, "I am the good shepherd," in John 10:11. He said, "I am the resurrection and

the life,” in John 11:25. He will say shortly in the course of the farewell discourse, “I am the way, the truth, and the life,” in John 14:6. In John 15:1, He’ll say, “I am the true vine,” and in these things, He’s saying, “I am God and I am everything that you need. You’re hungry spiritually. I am your bread. Moses is not the one who gave you bread out of Heaven. I am the bread. You are in the dark. What do you need? You need Me. I am the Light of the world. You need to find your way. You can’t find the way to safety. You’re a dumb sheep out there in danger. I am the door. You need someone to follow. I am the good shepherd. You are dying. You are spiritually dead. I am the resurrection and the life. You don’t know your way. I am the way. I am the truth. I am the life. And if you will learn to abide in Me, you will live a fruitful life, because I am the true vine.”

But not only does He use these seven different *I am* sayings, He also eight different times in the book uses the *I am* phrase in the absolute sense. There is no predicate. Like in, “I am the true vine,” there’s a predicate. “I am the true vine.” But there are eight times in this Gospel where He says, “I am.” When the woman at the well wants to know—she says, “The Messiah, when He comes, He will teach us all these things.” Jesus says, “The one who is speaking to you, I am.” It doesn’t translate to that in the English, because we say, “It is I, the one speaking to you.” But in the Greek, ἐγώ εἰμί (ego eimi) is together. “I am.” In John 8:24, turn back over to John 8 for a minute. Let’s look at it. There are three different places in John 8 where He does this.

John 8:24 ~ Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am, you will die in your sins.”

John 8:28 ~ So Jesus said, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me.

“When you lift Me up on the cross, you will know that I am.” In Verse 58 where the Jews were arguing with Him, He told them, “You’re of your father the devil.” They said, “No, we’re children of Abraham.” “No, you’re not. You’re of your father the devil. You want to do just what he wants to do. He wants to kill Me, he wants to murder Me, and you want to murder Me.” They began arguing with Him, and He says, “Your father Abraham, the guy you claim to have as a father, rejoiced to see My day.” They say, “How could Abraham know You? You’re not yet 50 years old.” He says, “I tell you, before Abraham was, I am.”

They understood that. The Jews has no problem understanding what He was saying. He was claiming to be God, and they did what any Jew who hates the One who claims to be God would do. Anyone who they actually think might be a nut case and claim to be God in their day, they were to pick up rocks and stone him. They picked up stones ready to stone Jesus, but He miraculously hid Himself and went out of the temple. We come again to that same thing here in John 13:19. He's doing the same thing. He says:

John 13:19 ~ From now on I am telling you before it comes to pass, so that when it does occur, you may believe that I am.

“I'm telling you what's going to happen before it happens, and when it happens, you will know who I am, and I am the Lord.” In fact, this is one of the most powerful things. If you can get someone, a Jehovah's Witness, to read John or read through it with you and look at it, and look at it in light of Isaiah 43 to 48... In fact, turn over to Isaiah 43. I want to show you this. Jesus' argument is basically really clearly taken from these chapters in Isaiah. Five times in the book of Isaiah in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, remember it was written in Hebrew, but when it was translated into Greek, the Septuagint, five times in between Isaiah 41 and 48, you have ἐγώ εἰμί (ego eimi) on the lips of Yahweh, on the lips of the Lord. One of those places is in Isaiah 43:10.

Isaiah 43

- 10** ***“You are My witnesses,” declares the Lord,
“And My servant whom I have chosen,
So that you may know and believe Me
And understand that I am.
Before Me there was no God formed,
And there will be none after Me.***
- 11** ***“I, even I, am the Lord,
And there is no savior besides Me.***
- 13** ***“Even from eternity I am He,
And there is none who can deliver out of My hand;
I act and who can reverse it?”***

Turn over to Isaiah 46:4.

Isaiah 46:4

***Even to your old age I will be the same,
And even to your graying years I will bear you!***

In the Greek it says, “Even to your old age, I am the same.” He’s saying the same thing that Moses heard. “I am.” And then in Verse 9, what is it about God that makes us know that He is God?

Isaiah 46:9

***“Remember the former things long past,
For I am God, and there is no other;
I am God, and there is no one like Me,...***

No one is like Me, the Lord. Why?

Isaiah 46:10

***Declaring the end from the beginning,
And from ancient times things which have not been done,
Saying, ‘My purpose will be established,
And I will accomplish all My good pleasure’;***

In Isaiah 48:2, here again:

Isaiah 48

2 The Lord of hosts is His name.

***3 “I declared the former things long ago
And they went forth from My mouth, and I proclaimed them.***

“See, I declared what was going to happen from long ago. It went forth from My mouth and it happened.” And then in Verse 12 of that same Chapter, God is still speaking:

Isaiah 48:12

***“Listen to Me, O Jacob, even Israel whom I called;
I am, I am the first, I am also the last.***

So when Jesus says these things, and in particular in John 13:19, He says, “Listen, I’m telling you what has not happened. I’m going to tell you before it happens, and when it happens, you will know that I am.” He’s claiming the omniscience of God, and the disciples as they reflected on this post-resurrection, they saw Him in His glory, and all of these things fell into place. They remembered how clearly He identified Judas. They remembered that He knew all these things from all along. And so then John writing would say as he says in John 2:25, “Jesus knew what was in the heart of man.” He didn’t entrust Himself to those who claim to be believing in Him who really weren’t believing in Him, because He knew their hearts, because He’s God. So you see in this storm that’s gathering, in this depressing, dark moment, you see the glory of Jesus shining out. Look at it in the knowledge of Jesus.

B) The Authority of Jesus:

Then you also see it in the authority of Jesus. Back to John 13, you see it in His authority. He has the authority of God. He says, “I know the ones I have chosen. I chose you.” He says in Matthew, “You didn’t choose Me. I chose you.” He has the authority to fulfill His word. “The reason I chose Judas was so that I could fulfill My own word which went forth a thousand years ago.” David uttered those words a thousand years before that. “He who eats my bread has lifted up his heel against me.” Jesus said, “The reason I chose Judas was to fulfill that word which I spoke through David a thousand years ago. You see none of my words fall to the ground. I am sovereign.” And you even see His sovereignty amazingly in Verse 27. When you have the eyes to see—after the morsel, after he gives the morsel, Satan enters into him. Jesus knows what’s happening. Full Satanic possession happens, but look what happens. Satan is orchestrating this terrible plot, but what Jesus says to him:

John 13:27 ~ ...“What you do, do quickly.”

Do you see that? That is Yahweh saying, “You do My bidding and do it now.” Literally in the Greek what it means is, “What you’re already planning to do, do more quickly. You may not have been doing it tonight, but you do it now.” That shows us that God is sovereign over evil. I mean, Satan is himself a free agent doing what he wants to do. Judas is a free agent doing what he wants to do.

The Bible makes clear God tempts no man to evil. He doesn't entice someone to evil. He doesn't do evil, and yet in this moment He is so wise and so good that He is able to do good and still lead evil to do exactly what He wants to have done so that nothing ever happens outside of His plan. This is the doctrine of Providence. Our name of our church comes from that, the idea that God ordains everything that comes to pass. Nothing happens—there's never a storm that breaks out where God didn't ordain it. Evil doesn't do something without God giving permission and ordaining it for His purposes.

This will be the thing that we will marvel at, I think, throughout eternity. We'll think back over and talk back over the wonder of the things that happened in our lives with new eyes to see, and we'll think about how terrible and vicious some acts of evil were, and we'll think, "And yet we see the glory of Christ governing that." Isn't that true of what we see in the cross? The most wicked thing that has ever happened, that has ever transpired, was the betrayal of the Son of God, the collusion of the Roman authorities, the turning over of this Jewish teacher who was pure and holy, turned over by His people.

Look at the evil being poured out. God pulls back His hand. Evil the storm is raging. People who a week before had been saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David. Oh save us, oh Son of David," praising Him, laying their robes on the ground so that the donkey that was carrying Him wouldn't have to get muddy feet. Many of the same people who were doing that are now saying, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" Barabbas, everybody hated Barabbas. Barabbas was one of those guys who when he was in jail, he needs to be in jail, and he needs to die. "You can choose." Pilate wanted to get off the hook. "You can choose Barabbas instead of Jesus. I always release somebody at Passover. Surely you want to choose Jesus to be released." "No, release to us Barabbas. Release to us Jeffrey Dahmer. Let Jesus die."

That's what the evil is doing in its full flower, its full measure of wickedness, and yet in that moment, what you have is God orchestrating the full outpouring of His wrath upon the sin-bearer, and you have the most miraculous deliverance happening right before your eyes. All of our sins, all of the sins of everyone who would ever believe, think about that. Every wicked thought, every vile deed, every horrible thing that you and I have ever done and the full weight of divine judgment that should come upon that, and you add up all of that, how could we have any hope? And yet God in His perfect wisdom allows free agents, Satan and his kingdom and people who hate God like Judas, to do exactly what they want to do, and He leads them along only doing good things.

Do you know how Jesus got him to do it at that moment? He did say, “Go do it immediately,” so we would know He was in charge, but the way He did it was, I mean, He’s genuinely offering Judas salvation. This is the wonder of it. When He gives him the bread, the heart of God is goodness. He’s reaching out to Judas, saying, “Believe. Receive Me as your Savior,” and yet He knows that in doing that, in His sovereign will, in doing that, it will harden his heart and will drive him to full determination to carry out his wicked scheme. And so God does what is good and does what is right, and yet evil does exactly what he wants to do at exactly that moment, because God had ordained before time that His Son would hang on the cross at the time the Passover was to be carried out, and the great deliverance of the Old Testament when the Jews were delivered from slavery would now be fulfilled in the archetype, the reality of the deliverance from real slavery and real darkness, the darkness of sin and evil.

You see the knowledge of Jesus, the authority of Jesus, and I just shared you see the goodness of Jesus.

C) The Goodness of Jesus:

Here He is genuinely doing a good thing to Judas. I mean, the Lord of glory washed Judas’ feet. The Lord of glory now reaches in and does what a host in Middle Eastern culture would do to bless a dear friend. He gives him the choice portion. He hands it to him. God does only good things. In fact, it’s emphasized four times in the passage, the word morsel is used. You see that repetition. Verse 26:

John 13:26 ~ “That is the one for whom I shall dip the morsel and give it to him.” So when He had dipped the morsel,...

John 13:27 ~ After the morsel, Satan then entered into him.

John 13:30 ~ So after receiving the morsel he went out immediately; and it was night.

Do you see that repetition? He wants you to see that. Look at Jesus giving the morsel, giving that choice piece to Judas.

D) The Wisdom of Jesus:

You see His perfect wisdom, that He knows how to do good, and do only good, and yet govern evil at every moment. Everything that happens in this world happens according to God's divine plan, according to His timetable. He does only good, and He wants you and me to do only good as His followers. Jesus is overcoming evil with good in this moment. Judas is lifting up his heel against Him, and Jesus hands him the morsel. Judas is lifting up the heel that Jesus just washed.

Now, what does that mean to you and me? How do you deal with the storms of life when they come? How do you deal with the rising tide of evil in our culture? You stop focusing on the darkness and you start looking at the Light. You exalt the Savior. You remember the greatest storm that has ever happened was this storm, and Jesus was governing every gust of wind. Every drop of rain fell where He wanted it to, and that same Savior, if you have repented and placed your faith in Jesus Christ, if you have realized that when He hung on the cross, when He bore the wrath of God, He bore the wrath for your sins, and if you have repented and turned from your sin and given yourself to Him in faith and trust, then you can know that whatever storm you go through, you go through it with a Savior who not only understands, but who governs it, who is in control.

This is why the Christian should be even in the darkest times, the happiest person. I don't know about you, but I struggle with this. I fret. If I listen to too much talk radio or if I turn on the Fox News channel for too long, I mean, I'm not saying there's anything wrong with that. There's a balance. We need to be aware. It's like you need to learn that the storm's coming so that you know what to do, or whatever, but I fret.

Psalm 37 is a great passage to read. In the first nine verses, three times it says, "Do not fret. It only leads to evil-doing." What are you supposed to do? Trust in the Lord and do good. When evil comes around you like a flood, what are you to do? You're to look at God. Trust in the Lord and just do good. Don't be discouraged. Hey, it's not my timetable. I wasn't wanting a storm right now, but is my timetable better or is God's? Lord, it's Your timetable. I just trust You. I want to walk with You. If you're going to let me walk through some storm, I just want to be focused on You so that I can be drinking in Your glory and Your sufficiency, remembering that You are my bread, You are my Light, you are my Shepherd. You're everything I need.

One of the reasons God had ordained that we walk through dark moments is just so we'll come to understand that. How do you know the sufficiency of Jesus if you don't need Jesus? How do you know that He's the bread of life if you're not hungry? How do you know that He's the Light of the world if you're not in the dark? So He graciously ordains the storms of life. He says, "I'm going to allow darkness to descend on your life. Now look at Me. I'm the Light. Know Me. Know My love. I want you to know the feelings of hunger." We don't know the feelings of physical hunger in our country. At least we haven't in recent generations. "But I want you to know the pain of spiritual hunger. I want you to feel like you're not getting things out of the word so you'll learn to yearn for Me with a deeper yearning, and you'll keep getting in the word, and you'll keep listening to the word, but you're going to understand what true spiritual hunger is so that I can satisfy you." When we understand that, it changes everything, doesn't it? No grumbling and complaining, just joy in the Lord. "You are sovereign. You have all knowledge. You know what's best to do. You know everything about the circumstance I'm in. You have all authority. You command Satan, You command Judas, You command everyone around me. If You command them, You command anybody I'm dealing with. You have all wisdom, and You are completely good." We can trust a Savior like that.

Let's go to the Lord in prayer...

Father, we thank You for the glory of Your Son, the glory of Jesus Christ. We pray that You would help us to have more clarity of mind. When the inevitable things happen in our lives on a daily basis, we have little storms, teach us, Lord, to keep our eyes upon our Master. Teach us to keep our eyes upon our dear Friend, the One who has loved us with an everlasting love. Father, we pray that You would make us more and more contented, more and more joyful, that we in these days and in our circles, that people around us would see more and more of the joy that ought to be in our lives, because we are filled up and overflowing with the fullness of who Jesus is. We pray this in His Name, Amen.

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