This chapter begins a section the commentators like to call the “Upper Room Discourse” which consists of chapter 13 through 17 (even though chapter 17 happens after they have left the upper room). This Gospel contains the longest account of this time that Jesus spent with His disciples prior to His arrest and death. Interestingly enough, however, the “Lord’s Supper” is not really discussed, at least like it is in the other Gospels. The action in this chapter really begins after the meal. The focus of these chapters in the book of John is the private teaching that Jesus did with His disciples. These chapters can be considered Jesus’ farewell message to His close friends. He has told them before, many times, that He is leaving them, but we see no evidence that they really understood this. Jesus now tries to prepare them for what is coming over the next few days, and for the rest of their lives. Chapter 13 offers us a humbling view of our Master teaching His servants just exactly how to be a servant.

1Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

- Jesus knew His ministry on earth was almost complete. The words used in this verse indicate a completeness, not just an end. Jesus had spoken and done only those things the Father told Him, and He had done it completely and perfectly. Now one last thing was on the horizon that would finalize His mission – His death, ....and then His resurrection.

- Jesus had spoken of His departing from the world to return to the Father many times in preparation for what was coming the next day. But He knew that the disciples really didn’t understand. He loved these men to the final moments, but knew they didn’t really grasp the situation. These hours with Him just prior to His arrest will be their last opportunity for receiving instruction and understanding from Him.

- “Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father...” Up until this time, whenever something happened that was not in God’s will or the timing wasn’t right, we heard Jesus say “My hour has not yet come.” Now that moment has arrived. His hour has come. It is the hour of horror, and the moment of glory. Jesus came from the Father, and He would return to the Father, just as He had been saying all along.

- The Greek word for “depart” is metabainō. It carries the implication of a journey. His sojourn on earth has indeed been a journey. He traveled from heaven to earth, and now it was time to return. It was a journey of love, not just for these disciples, but for the entire world.
2 And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray Him,

• “And supper being ended...” Unlike the other Gospel writers, this writer does not record the actual Passover meal. However the words we have in English here don’t give us the right place in the events that night. The Greek literally should read “and supper being in progress.” At this moment, they are in the middle of the Passover meal, which typically can last for hours as all the traditions and requirements are completed.

• Some people wonder why this Gospel writer does not make more mention of the meal itself, such as Jesus’ words when taking third cup of wine, or breaking the Afikomen (the hidden matzah). There are a number of explanations for this, including the fact that the other Gospels had already provided a complete description and this was not the focus of this writer. There may be other reasons as well. Here’s what one commentator believed about the omission:

COMMENTARY: Why does John omit something so important? I think it is because at the time John wrote, there were already Christians who were making a ritual out of the Lord’s Supper. There is a great danger in putting importance on a ritual rather than on the person Jesus Christ. It is more important to know the Word of God than it is to partake of Communion. There is no blessing in Communion apart from a knowledge of the Word of God. An apologetics professor, whom I had, said that it was Christ in your heart and bread in your tummy. The bread in your tummy won’t be there long; Christ in your heart is the essential. I believe that is why John omits telling about the Lord’s Supper. (McGee) NOTE: For many, the act of communion is a cherished moment of fellowship with the Lord. This is a very personal time. However, for others, it has merely become a ritual, with no true meaning. Paul dealt with this problem, and perhaps since this Gospel was written after the others, this writer did not focus on the actual meal for that reason. It is the same today. If communion affords you a precious time with your Master, then it is a very good thing. If it is nothing but ritual, it is not serving its intended purpose and can actually be a “bad” thing. This is precisely the subject of a little chapter in the book of Zechariah. Some Jews from Babylon traveled down to consult with the priests who had returned to the land of Israel. They had a question that needed an answer. They wanted to know if they should still observe some fasts and mourning that the Jews had initiated after the fall of Jerusalem, to commemorate the siege against the Jews. God spoke to the prophet Zechariah and told him this: “Say to all the people of the land, and to the priests: ‘When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months during those seventy years, did you really fast for Me—for Me? When you eat and when you drink, do you not eat and drink for yourselves?” (Zechariah 7:5-6) God did not directly answer their question. However, His response indicates that if they were observing this, or any ritual, for God, it was a good thing. If they were doing it only for themselves (in other words, just a ritual with no meaning), it was not a good thing. It is the same today with any ritual of faith. If it is truly for God, to honor Him and for fellowship with Him, then it is good. Any ritual that has lost its meaning to the observer is not considered a good thing in God’s eyes.

• “the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray Him,...” We are taken to the upper room where Jesus is spending His last hours in loving fellowship and ministry. Then, in the middle of this touching scene, we hear that the enemy has already been at work in Judas. Jesus knew this, of course. We have been given little glimpses into the character of Judas, so it is no surprise to us what is happening here. It would have been shocking to the disciples, however, and they were stunned later when it was revealed. The Holy Spirit gives us this information at this moment, even before a very moving portion of the evening’s events, so that we know the enemy is always at work, always plotting and we must be always vigilant and protected.
3 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 and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, 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.

- “Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God,...” Once again this Gospel writer emphasizes that Jesus knows all things, not just about this part of the plan of God, but ALL THINGS. He is the I AM, and He is omniscient. This verse also indicates that the control of all these things is also in His hands. Things did not just happen to Jesus, He orchestrated the entire mission on earth.

- Now Jesus does something completely unexpected and somewhat shocking. We have heard this lesson so often that sometimes the wonder of it is lost on us. Consider this. Jesus left the glory of heaven to come to earth to die. He is the I AM, and now He prepares to wash the feet of the disciples! This is absolutely amazing. God washing feet? This was startling to the disciples, even with their limited understanding of who Jesus truly is.

- Footwashing was considered the lowest, the most menial (and disgusting) task normally performed by a servant – the very lowest servant in the household. The streets in those days were very dirty, often filled with raw sewage. No one wanted that in their homes, so the lowest slave or servant would wash a visitor’s feet on arrival. It was considered a gracious welcoming gesture to the visitor, as well as protection for the home!

- Here in the upper room which they had procured for the Passover, there were no servants to do this. Obviously it was not done when they first came, as would be the custom. Jesus waited until the meal was underway to make a point. On this occasion there was no servant and no one else volunteered. Only this Gospel contains this incident, but Luke says that in rebuking the disciples over a quarrel concerning who would be the greatest, Jesus said, "I am among you as one who serves." (Luke 22:24–27). They may have been debating this point that evening, when Jesus unexpectedly showed them the answer. Maybe Jesus waited for one of the disciples to perform this nasty task, and when no one did, He rose up to do it.

- There is an interesting connection with the Old Testament Law in this act of Jesus. In ancient Israel, a slave would generally serve a master for six years. By the Law (Exodus 21), he could be freed in the 7th year. But if the slave got married in this time and had a family, the family was considered in bondage as well, and only the original servant or slave was freed. If desired, the slave could choose to remain in the master’s house, as a servant. It would be unlikely that a married slave would choose to leave his family behind. To show that this slave, now a voluntary servant, had made the choice to remain with his bride and family willfully still serving his master, there was a specific ceremony and “mark” to denote this choice. Then the master would back him up to a door post and pierce the former slave’s ear with an awl (and usually place a special identifiable earring there) which would identify him as a voluntary slave forever. Although he could have gone out free, he stayed because of love.
• **JESUS DID THIS!!** He took a bride while on earth — the entire believing Church. He was pierced because He loved her. He did not have to stay, and He did not have to die. But He did it out of love, in order to provide ultimate salvation and eternal life for us. *(This process of a slave willingly agreeing to stay in the master’s household is what the “bond servant” of the New Testament is about. Paul called himself a bond servant, one who willingly remains in His Master’s house and serves Him forever.)*

• Knowing that He would be leaving them soon, Jesus needed to teach His disciples some important and powerful lessons. They would all be servants, doing His will, even (especially) after His departure. Until now, they didn’t really understand what being a servant of God meant. Even after this remarkable “visual aid” for learning, it would take the Holy Spirit to drive this lesson of servanthood deep into their hearts.

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6Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, “Lord, are You washing my feet?”

7Jesus answered and said to him, “What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this.”

• **“Lord, are You washing my feet?”** The way the Greek is constructed here stresses Peter’s refusal to have Jesus wash his feet. Peter was indicating that this was not the way it should be, that the Master should not be serving the servant. Peter was correctly understanding at least his position of humility compared to Jesus.

• **“What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this.”** The fact that the disciples did not understand Jesus or what He said or did at the time is mentioned several times in this Gospel. Jesus here indicates this is the case, but that they will understand at some point. We all have great hindsight most of the times, but it often takes the Holy Spirit to reveal the true meaning of things, just as it did for these disciples. That would happen after the resurrection, and after the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) when the Holy Spirit came to indwell all believers. The disciples did indeed understand later.

8Peter said to Him, “You shall never wash my feet!” Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.” 9Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!” 10Jesus said to him, “He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you.” 11For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, “You are not all clean.”

• **“Peter said to Him, “You shall never wash my feet!”** Peter always seems to be the “verbal” one. He vehemently objects here to Jesus washing his feet. He says “no way!” In the Greek, this is statement means “absolutely never.” Peter is aghast at the thought. We aren’t told if any of the others objected like this. It is typical to find Peter as the spokesperson for the group.

• **“If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.”** Now Jesus says something that appalled Peter even more. Peter always seemed to respond with great emotional fervor and dedication to Jesus, and whatever He said. He did not question what Jesus said, but instantly knew that he wanted everything Jesus could give him. So quite naturally Peter responds with another over the top statement: **“Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!”** Again, Peter did not understand what Jesus was referencing here, but responds from his heart.
• “He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean;...” Jesus meant that without this washing there could be no fellowship with Him. Jesus is referring to far more than the symbolic washing of feet with water, or the whole body with water. Without the spiritual washing by the blood of Jesus, no one can be washed clean of sins. By his faith, Peter has already guaranteed his spiritual washing, even though Jesus had not yet been sacrificed.

• Jesus is using a daily practice of life in those days to make a point. It was customary at that time to go to a public bath, or to the local rivers or streams for overall bathing. But sandals were the typical footwear, and because of the filth in the streets, every home generally had a basin of water to wash feet. So even after a general bath, one’s feet needed to be washed before entering a home. Again, however, Jesus is making an analogy of the physical to the spiritual.

• Jesus used two different words for “wash,” but most translations to English do not make the distinction between the two. The first “washed” or “bathed” is the Greek word “louo,” which means to bathe the entire body. The second “wash” (his feet) is “nipto” in Greek, which means only to wash the hands and feet or any other single part of the body. It does not refer to an overall bathing experience. The first wash (louo) refers to salvation, the second (nipto) refers to the daily cleansing of sin picked up the world, like the dirt picked up by sandaled feet. We do the first only once, we do the second frequently.

• Overall “general” bathing from the filth of sin happens through the blood of Jesus, soon to be shed (the next day in the context of this event) on a cross (once, and for all). But we do walk through a filthy world, and our “feet” must be cleaned daily. The Word of God keeps the believer clean. The Word acts as a mirror to reveal our sin. Then, if we recognize it and confess it, we are made clean through God’s forgiveness. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9) Also “...just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,...” (Ephesians 5:25-26)

• We can understand what Jesus is referencing better by understanding that our “feet” reference our daily walk. By their faith in Jesus, the disciples (and us) have already accomplished the one-time bathing of salvation. But their feet, representing their daily “walk” through this dirty world, needed washing. So do ours. We also must walk through streets filled with garbage – the garbage of the world. We live in a trash dump of sin and evil, ruled by our enemy. When we walk through this world, we are defiled and get dirty. We become disobedient, and sin gets into our lives. NO believer goes through a day without getting just a little dirty. He says that we cannot have fellowship with Him if we are dirty. So the washing of the feet is the cleansing in order to restore us to fellowship.

• COMMENTARY: In order to have our feet washed we must first confess our sin. To confess means to agree with God. It means to say the same thing that God says about our sin. One of the hardest things in the world is to get a saint to admit he is a sinner. Coldness, indifference, lack of love, all are seen by God as sin. If we confess, He is faithful and just to forgive. But that is not all. If you are going to have your feet washed, you must put them into the hands of the Savior. That is obedience. We can’t just say, “God forgive me, I did wrong,” and then go out and do the same thing all over again. That’s not getting your feet into the hands of the Savior. (Mc Gee)

• “…but not all of you.” Jesus knew that Judas would betray Him, and this statement indicates that Judas has not been “washed” clean, or taken that overall bath of salvation. He did not experience what the other disciples did. Judas did not have faith in Jesus, and therefore could not be covered by the overall washing in His shed blood – the washing of salvation.
So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you?” You call me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, 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.

Do you know what I have done to you?” Jesus knew these disciples were confused, stunned and completely at a loss by what Jesus had just done. He asks this question in order to get their attention and focus on what has just happened so He could teach them a huge lesson.

“You call me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.” Jesus had performed the lowest act of a servant – washing someone else’s feet. He had shown them that He, as Lord, Teacher, and Master, had not considered this action beneath Him, and neither should they. They would be carrying on His work in the world, and they must be prepared to do as He did – serve one another, anyone for that matter, in any helpful way, no matter how menial. The disciples had previously been arguing about who was going to be greatest in God’s Kingdom. They needed this lesson of humility and service to anyone and everyone, no matter what.

“For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.” Jesus taught a most powerful lesson by first showing them, then explaining it to them. His actions were an example of humble servanthood, ministry which they would need to understand to work in His Kingdom. When we behave in this way, we teach others this servant’s heart as well.

Some think Jesus was instituting an ordinance about foot washing here. That is not the case. He was simply displaying humility in service, as He wanted the disciples to understand and do similar types of acts (not foot washing specifically, but an attitude of humble service). He is not commanding us to perform this act, but to acquire the attitude that this activity shows. The actual act of foot washing was never taken by the church as a rite or an ordinance. It is only mentioned in 1 Timothy 5:9-10, and used here only to show the kind of attitude a widow should have: "No widow may be put on the list of widows unless she is over sixty, has been faithful to her husband, and is well known for her good deeds, such as bringing up children, showing hospitality, washing the feet of the saints, helping those in trouble and devoting herself to all kinds of good deeds." Here foot washing is an act of Christian hospitality, not a rite or ritual.

Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him.

Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master;...” Jesus has established that doing the most disgusting humble service to others is not beneath Him. Now He says that servants are not greater than their masters. The disciples are the servants, He is the Master. If He, the Master, has just humbled Himself by doing something only a lowly servant would be expected to do, so should those servants of His do the same. The should have the same attitude of service, because they are not greater than He is.

...nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him....” The disciples will also be the ones sent, in His Name, and they are not greater than He who has sent them. Therefore, they must humble themselves as He has just done. If the Master and Lord is willing to humble Himself to the point of washing His disciples’ feet, then the disciples should be willing to do the same thing.
Blessing is the result of humble service. However, this statement is spoken with a double message. Now the disciples “know” these things. They know that they are not greater than their Master and are expected to do as He does. Notice, however, the big “if.” This blessing does not come about as a result of knowing. It is the direct result of doing. This is exactly what James said some time later in his letter to believers: “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” (James 1:22)

Inside this lesson on humble service is also a lesson that is applied to LEADERSHIP. Jesus would be leaving this world soon. It was critical that the disciples understand that they are the ones soon to be charged with taking the Gospel to the ends of the earth, and becoming the leaders of others. Leadership begins with humility and service. In order to lead, they must first become servants. There is a popular leadership model that is called “Servant Leadership” (first devised by Robert Greenleaf, but expanded on by many others). This is the premise that business leaders, or leaders in all areas, must first be servants to those they lead.

COMMENTARY: THE ORDER OF THE TOWEL: Leadership is a fascinating topic. Business books offer models of leadership as diverse as Attila the Hun, Oriental warlords, and Abraham Lincoln. But Jesus painted a different picture of leadership. As He wrapped up His work, Jesus held a dinner for his closest associates. Instead of delivering a state-of-the-union address or naming a successor, He chose to leave His seat at the head of the table and pick up some household servant’s equipment—a basin of water and a towel. He then washed the feet of every person at the table—even Judas, His betrayer (John 13:1–20). Foot-washing was usually performed by household servants as an act of hospitality to weary, dusty guests (compare Luke 7:44). Leaders and hosts did not stoop to such a menial task. But Jesus did. Seated once again at the table, the Lord asked whether His followers understood what He had done. He then exhorted them to adopt the same posture of serving others, thereby following His example. He assured them that they would be blessed if they did. Jesus still calls believers today to become members of the “Order of the Towel.” As Christ’s followers, we need to lead others by serving them.

“I do not speak concerning all of you...” Jesus has been speaking of their being clean, a spiritual analogy to their faith, and their salvation by Him. Now He says it does not apply to all of them. He is getting ready to reveal that someone there in that room will betray Him.

“...but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, ‘He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me.’” Jesus is always in control, and links what He does and says to the scriptures that have prophesied about Him. He perfectly fulfills all of these (more than 300 such prophecies in the Old Testament about His first coming). Here he references a scripture in Psalm 41:9 - "Even my close friend, whom I trusted, he who shared my bread, has lifted up his heel against me." This is also a direct reference to the first promise of a Messiah given in the garden. “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.” (Genesis 3:15)
Jesus is soon to reveal His betrayer, and He is linking that person and his betrayal of Jesus to the earliest of prophecies regarding God’s plan of redemption. “...lifted up his heel against Me” is an expression which means “to take advantage of someone.”

“Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am He.” God has always authenticated Himself through prophecy. He tells us what will happen before it happens, then causes it to happen precisely as He said. That is authentication of His authority and His omniscience. No one else can do this. Here Jesus is doing the same thing. He says He is telling the disciples this so they will know He is I AM. (Again, the word “He” is not in the original Greek. This is a reference to being the I AM.)

“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.” Some think Jesus is referring to the fact that Judas was probably sent out with the others when they practiced taking the good news to others. What matters is not the messenger, what changes lives is the Word of God, and God Himself. We are not saved by the faith of the messenger, but by hearing the word of God. This is also a plain statement that when people receive the messengers that God sends, they are in effect receiving Him. It is all in the attitude of the hearer. Do they openly embrace the message brought to them, or do they despise it? They will show their attitude about the One who sends the message in how they receive the messenger. This is also another allusion to the fact that Jesus and the Father are One.

COMMENTARY: I knew a preacher who had become an unbeliever. A man who drove me to the train said to me, “Dr. McGee, I am puzzled. I was saved under the ministry of that man. I know I am saved and I know I am a child of God but I am puzzled. How can you explain it?” I showed this man this very text and told him that even Judas had gone out preaching and had won converts, not because he was Judas, but because he had given the message. God will bless His Word. We are saved by hearing the Word.

When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me.”

“He was troubled in spirit,...” In the previous chapter Jesus said He was “troubled” in spirit. This was in His anticipation of the terrible suffering He would endure on the cross. Perhaps here He is thinking of the same thing, but at this moment it would seem that He is troubled about the betrayal that is coming. He knows it is part of the plan, but I believe He is troubled for Judas, not because of Judas. God states that He desires that none perish. But Judas will perish in his sins, and this troubles the heart of Jesus.

Jesus has been speaking about the fulfillment of scripture, but now, so that these still confused disciples will comprehend, He must clearly state that one of the disciples would betray Him. He had to do this often, when the disciples didn’t seem to understand. There was no misunderstanding this statement. He would be betrayed, by one of them.

There is a whole lot of confusion going on in this room. Now they find out one of them will betray Jesus! It couldn’t be! The next obvious question is WHO? Apparently these guys did not suspect the character and behavior of Judas. They didn’t know who would do this.
Perhaps they went down the list and mentally considered who might be the betrayer. Perhaps they even considered that they personally might do this. They were shocked, and looked at one another for some clue. Mark tells us: "They were saddened, and one by one they said to him, "Surely not I?" (14:19)

"Now there was leaning on Jesus’ bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved.” Who is this one “whom Jesus loved...”? This debate will go on until we meet this person in heaven. For the most part, it is assumed that this is John, considered to be the author of this Gospel, since the writer refers to himself as “the one Jesus loved.” However, there is a great deal of speculation that this is not John, and John is not the writer of this Gospel. He is not identified as John here, and is not identified anywhere in this Gospel as the writer. For that, and many other reasons, there is evidence to consider the fact that Lazarus might have been this person, and might even have been the writer of this Gospel. For more information on this, see the comments on Chapter 11. It doesn’t really matter, however, and we should not get caught up in wild speculation, especially when these facts are not critical to our understanding. It is interesting to consider, however!

Peter apparently motions or signals this person, (“leaning on Jesus’ bosom,” who was often considered the guest of honor at such an occasion), to get his attention and ask Jesus who this one is who will betray Him. This person reclining next to Jesus did so.

26Jesus answered, “It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it.” And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. 27Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, “What you do, do quickly.”

The disciples ask, and Jesus answers. He does not shout out “Judas!” but rather gives them a sign. If they are paying attention, they will have their answer. This is good for us to remember. If we diligently seek God to answer some prayer or some question, He will. But we must be paying attention and watching for the answer. Apparently, however, it still didn’t click with them that Judas was the betrayer.

In a meal such as this, it was the custom for the host at a banquet to take a piece of bread, dip it in the wine or sauce, and present it to an honored guest. The Lord makes Judas His honored “friend” by this gesture. Judas is given one last chance to change his mind, to follow Jesus instead of betray Him. Jesus gives him a way out. Judas was never forced to do what he did. He made his own choices. Jesus is showing that Judas was considered a “friend,” part of His inner circle of disciples, and thus he will completely fulfill that prophecy we saw above: Psalm 41:9 - "Even my close friend, whom I trusted, he who shared my bread, has lifted up his heel against me." Even in the garden Jesus will say, “... Friend, do what you came for ...” (Matthew 26:50) Jesus knew what Judas would do, but He did not force him to do it. In fact, He gave him every opportunity to NOT do it, and even offered His friendship to Judas to the very last.

“Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him.” There was nothing magical about this piece of bread. The enemy had hardened Judas’ heart long before this. Judas had never submitted to Jesus in faith, which is what saved the other disciples. Instead, he trusted the world, not God. At this point, he is being directed by the enemy because of his own heart.
COMMENTARY: Satan took over this man Judas gradually. I don’t think that Satan ever takes a man suddenly. There are many little falls that permit Satan to move in gradually. Then finally he takes over. The Lord gave Judas an opportunity to accept Him, but Judas turned his back on the Lord. Then Satan moved in and took him over completely. Judas makes his own decision. God never sends a man to hell unless that man first of all sends himself there. You see, God ratifies human decision; God seconds the motion. When a man says that he accepts Christ, God says, “I second it; I receive you.” When a man says that he rejects Christ, as Judas did here, God says, “I second the motion.”

“What you do, do quickly.” Jesus knows exactly what will happen here. He is still in control of His own future, and could have stopped this at any time. Judas’ heart was hardened and he had already determined to betray Jesus for money. Jesus will die, but only on God’s time, His own, not the world’s. The religious Jews did not want to arrest Jesus during the Passover feast, when all the crowds were in Jerusalem. They wanted to do their dirty work in secret, or at least away from the crowds. But God had already foreordained the death of His Son, right down to the precise day and time. So Jesus asks Judas to do his deed quickly. Judas will go tell the religious leaders that Jesus has been found, and can be arrested now. This is precisely what Jesus wanted, in order to fulfill the plan of God. Jesus was crucified on Passover, in complete fulfillment of God’s plan. Man cannot control God. God will always be in control, no matter how things appear to us in this world, or how much we try to control them.

But no one at the table knew for what reason He said this to him. For some thought, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus had said to him, “Buy those things we need for the feast,” or that he should give something to the poor. Having received the piece of bread, he then went out immediately. And it was night.

The poor disciples are still in the dark. They have been clearly shown that Judas will betray Jesus, but perhaps their minds can’t grasp the entire concept of betrayal. They heard what Jesus said to Judas, but didn’t know why. Judas was the treasurer of this little group. It would have been his responsibility to give to the poor during these feasts and other celebrations. It is still a common practice to give special donations to the poor during the Jewish celebrations, and the disciples thought this is what Jesus directed Judas to do.

Right after receiving the piece of bread from Jesus that marked him as the one who would betray Him, Judas left the room. Only Jesus and Judas knew why, and where he was going. The Gospel writer provides us a little piece of information for timing purposes, but this is remarkably symbolic. He says, “And it was night.” The other disciples are still in the upper room, still in the light from their oil lamps, and still in the Light of their Savior. But not Judas. He is now surrounded by darkness, which throughout scripture always symbolizes the evil and sin in the world. By leaving Jesus, Judas is engulfed by darkness. What a chilling picture.
So, when he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and glorify Him immediately.

- Judas is gone, taking the “darkness” with him. The entire atmosphere in this room now seems to change. Jesus still has much to say to these scared, confused disciples, and now He begins to encourage and inform His friends. He now begins a series of “talks” with His disciples that will continue through the next few chapters. We have a need to give things in scripture fancy academic sounding names...therefore these teachings are called the “Upper Room Discourse.” This isn’t entirely correct, and the teaching continues outside this little room as Jesus moves out and toward the Garden of Gethsemane.

- “Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him...” There are a lot of “glorifieds” in this verse! Essentially, Jesus and the Father will be glorified together, each in the other, and it will happen now. This is a reference to the soon death, and imminent resurrection of the Creator of the Universe. That puts this in a sort of mind-boggling perspective. The One who created it all, will die the next day on a cruel human devised execution device, as a human. And in this process, He will be glorified, and so will the Father, as the Almighty everlasting and powerful I AM. That is beyond our understanding, but these disciples needed to hear it, even if they didn’t understand it. The Holy Spirit would help them digest and process it all later.

- We have talked about the meaning of the word GLORIFIED – the word in Greek for glory is DOXA – which literally implies to reveal majesty, honor and power. The true identity and majesty and power of Jesus will be REVEALED completely on the cross, and in His rising again from the grave!

- “Little children,...” This is the only time this phrase is used in the Gospels. Jesus now becomes like a loving parent here. He knows their hearts, knows they are frightened and confused. He is trying to comfort them, and prepare them for even more frightening moments over the course of the next few days. Beyond comfort, however, He has much to say to them that they may not understand, but need to know now.

- These men have left their families and their livelihoods to follow Jesus. And now it is all ending? They love Jesus, and don’t know what is happening or why. Jesus has tried to prepare them, but their minds could not grasp it all. They need the soothing voice of the Master to calm their fears.

- “...I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come,’ so now I say to you. A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.” By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”
“...so now I say to you. “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.”” In many ways, this is not a completely new commandment to the Jews, who had the Law. The “old” one stated it this way: "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD." (Leviticus 19:18) But Jesus “updates” this commandment with something new, a new way to love each other – like He loved them. They (we) were not to just love as they loved themselves, but to go even further and to love as Jesus loved them. This is difficult. Can we love each other in the way Jesus loves us? Can we extend to one another a servant love like washing feet? Can we actually choose to die for each other? On the surface, and upon first hearing, this seems like the old commandment. But it goes much, much farther into the realm of supernatural divine love. At this moment, Jesus had loved them fully, and they loved Him in return. But in a few hours He would die for them. This gives this old commandment an entirely new meaning.

“By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” What these disciples didn’t really know at this time is that they would continue to be Jesus’ disciples. A Rabbi’s disciples (“talmudim”) would follow him until they found someone more “enlightening” or until the rabbi’s death. These disciples would continue beyond their Rabbi’s death. They would follow Him until the end of their lives. Now Jesus says that this new commandment for a new kind of love will be the hallmark of their discipleship. There will be a new movement, new disciples, and this will continue until the Rabbi returns again. And the world needs to know who these disciples are. Wearing a label won’t work. Speaking it won’t work. Living it is the only thing that truly marks a disciple of Jesus. And love, this new kind of love, is what the world will see as the true identifier of a disciple of Jesus. It was true then, and it is true now.

Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, where are You going?” Jesus answered him, “Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward.” Peter said to Him, “Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake.” Jesus answered him, “Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times.”

“Lord, where are You going?” Once again, Peter speaks for the group. It is certain that all the disciples in that little room were wondering what Peter finally voiced. As usual, they were still thinking in the physical, not spiritual realms.

“Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward.” Again, Jesus states they can’t follow Him. They have been following Him for three years. But now they can’t do that. However, Jesus gives them a bit of hope. They don’t understand it now, but later they will. They WILL follow Him later. In fact, all but one of the disciples would follow Him into a martyr’s death, and ultimately to Paradise with Jesus.

“Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake.” Brave, outspoken Peter. He truly believed he could still follow Jesus, even if it meant his death. He was willing here. Perhaps this is a little bit of pride showing. As much as we like to think we can and will do courageous or bold things, when the time comes, we behave much differently. And this is precisely what will happen to Peter. His faith and his intentions are sincere. He meant every word he said. He even attempted to fight for Jesus by foolishly cutting off the ear of the servant in the garden. Peter wanted to be brave.

“Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times.” Jesus’ first comment here is not mocking Peter. It
is a sincere question. Perhaps it because Jesus knows that Peter will indeed lay down his life for Jesus. Just not yet. In this moment, Peter will cave. He will end up denying, rather than defending, His Master. In this confusing time, Peter is truly a child, just as Jesus addressed them. He would later “grow up in the Lord” when the Holy Spirit came on the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost). It is hard to believe that the same man who so cowardly denied Jesus three times this night, will preach a powerful sermon where 3,000 people are saved (Acts 2), would go on to devote his life to teaching about Jesus, healing and ministering to others in the power of the Holy Spirit, and eventually dying for this beloved Master. That’s the difference between human effort, and the abilities given by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

- Jesus provided a **foolproof obvious sign that would mark Peter’s denial**. Perhaps in the moment, each time he feared and denied, Peter did not realize what he was doing was fulfilling the words of Jesus. But when that rooster crowed, Peter knew, and he was filled with grief and sorrow over his behavior. This is the contrite heart that God loves.

- **Peter was not alone in his sincerity, his faith, or his future.** All of the disciples would “run away” from Jesus, would cower in fear after His death, and be surprised and shocked at His resurrection. And all of them except John would end up serving Him faithfully and eventually giving up their lives for Him. As usual, though, Peter is the mouthpiece for the rest of the disciples.

- Peter found out the hard way that we cannot have any confidence in ourselves, or our flesh. Human efforts cannot be trusted. Paul spent a great deal of time discussing this concept. "So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members.” (Romans 7:21-23) Paul went on for a number of chapters in Romans talking about the battle of the weak flesh and our need for reliance on the Spirit. We must live by the Spirit, and try not to sin. But when (not if!) we do, God is there to forgive. Peter would be forgiven for his cowardice on this evening.

- It is interesting to note that **Jesus’ prediction of Peter’s denial appears in all of the Gospels** (Matthew 26:33-35; Mark 14:29-31; Luke 22:31-34). There is good reason for this – we are all like Peter. We all “mean well” but in reality we don’t always “do” well. Thank God for the blood of Jesus, and abundant grace and forgiveness!

- **We should be thankful for Peter.** We have an excellent record of his personality, his faith, his outspokenness, his ability to discern truth, his inability to understand, his sometimes bumbling and boisterous nature, his desire to serve, his mighty proclamations that ended in disaster, and eventually his sold out service and empowered life for Jesus. Peter is just like us. We are just like Peter. We should be thankful we have his life and words to give us hope!

- This is **just the beginning of some profound and critically important lessons** for disciples of Jesus. Not just those gathered that evening at Passover, but for all disciples in all times.