

## **Maundy Thursday**

Gospel Reading: John 13:1-17, 31b-35

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Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. 2The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper 3Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, 4got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. 5Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. 6He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" 7Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." 8Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." 9Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" 10Jesus said to him, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you." 11For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean." 12After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? 13You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. 14So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. 16Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. 17If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

31When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. 32If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. 33Little children, I am with

you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' 34I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. 35By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

#### SERMON-

Some of us are working through "bucket lists" in hopes of living well. Some as they near the end of life wish to die well, so they make practical arrangements to care for family or possibly reconciling with someone. Knowing he's at the end of his life, Jesus chooses to wash feet. He also knows full well the community he's formed will unravel. He knows full well that one among them will actively bring down the authorities upon them.

Knowing what he knows, Jesus loves with action and attention to the whole person. He washes feet—necessary for health, hygiene, and for the sake of a community meal in close quarters. John goes into exquisite detail—six verbs by my count describe Jesus tending to physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs of his followers.

Jesus' command to love one another isn't a mandate to feel. It's a command to act. The needs of the world are enormous and well beyond our scope. My high school mate Mike hosts a podcast and has written about the kindness project. He interviews guests about ways they show kindness. Some kindness take the shape of a program or community effort. Others forms of kindness are very simple and individual like saying one word of encouragement to someone.

Tonight it's beneficial for us to remember why we do what we do. Yes, Jesus commands us to love—in tangible ways just as he does. We also remember the words from First John, We love because God first loved us. And as John's Gospel puts it, Jesus loves us to the very end—the end being both the end of his life and end being the accomplishing of his aim to restore all things. amen.