

7453

SILVER STAR BIBLE SCHOOL 1994

IN THE UPPER ROOM

Speaker: Bro. John Ullman

Study #2

It was Night

Reading: John 13:10-22

My Dear Brethren and Sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In verse 10 of John chapter 13, the Lord is now beginning to draw the threads together of the lesson that's to be learned, from the exercise that He has just undertaken, namely the washing of the disciples' feet. You notice that verse 10 makes the point that though with dusty feet it becomes necessary to wash those feet, day by day, or maybe several times in a day, but, if you are really thoroughly clean, or cleansed in a spiritual way, then one's sacrifice will cover that cleansing. It is very interesting that there appears to be almost an analogy with the Law of Moses, and the sacrifices that were offered daily. It was as though in a figure, they daily needed to be cleansed with a daily offering of the sacrifices that were made. But we will recall the words of Hebrews, where, when the Lord Jesus Christ made His offering, it was once and for all. One offering for all men for all time. And so He's endeavouring to get this lesson across to His disciples. You notice the wording there that 'one is clean every whit, needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all'. Those are the words with which verse 10 concludes.

Why now, friend, is that last phrase, 'is clean all over'? In other words the lesson being taught here, is that thorough washing results in thorough cleansing. And is that not so in a literal sense? It is quite true; thorough washing results in thorough cleansing, therefore, if we permit the Lord Jesus Christ to thoroughly wash us, in the blood of His sacrifice, through the waters of baptism, by the washing of the water by the Word, then shall we be thoroughly cleansed and therefore, ready for the kingdom of God. He tells them 'ye are clean' and this is exactly the same word as occurs in chapter 15 and verse 3. And we should note the way in which the word is used there. 'Now ye are clean' said the Lord to them, 'through the Word which I have spoken unto you', so therefore, the Word is the cleansing agent. The Lord Jesus Christ was the WORD made flesh, therefore, He was able to be 'the cleansing agent'. But, since He is no longer with us upon earth, we do have His word, or we have the Word of God and thereby continues to become the cleansing agent. So therefore, this ceremonial act that the Lord had just performed, was to teach something deeper, of much deeper significance than simply washing of feet. He was dealing with moral cleansing; moral

and spiritual cleansing by the washing of the Word, as Paul refers to it in Ephesians 5 and verse 26. And He is trying to get across to the disciples here, in verse 10, that until a person has been thoroughly morally cleansed by the washing of the Word, he is not fitted either to serve God or Christ or Christ's brethren. And we believe that the whole of this wording in verse 10 is based upon the wording in Exodus, in relation to the laver.

We might just turn there for a moment, with a hand in John chapter 13. If we go back to Exodus 30, again we will see the importance of washing, because without the correct thorough washing, it is not only a question of not being clean; it is a question of facing eternal death. Unless we are cleansed by the means that God provides, then we are without hope. And so Exodus chapter 30 tells us in verse 17, 'And Yahweh spake unto Moses, saying, Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and his foot also of brass, to wash withal: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein. For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat: When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto Yahweh. So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not: and it shall be a statute for ever to them (that is the Aaronic priesthood), even to him and to his seed throughout their generations'. You will observe that the 'washing process' instituted through the laver, stood between the priest of the altar and between the priest of the tabernacle, so that there was no access to the altar. There was no access to the Holy Place. There was no access to the Most Holy Place and the Shechinah glory, without the prerequisite of washing. And without that washing, said the Law, they would die. Let them not bypass that; that's what God is saying to Moses. DO NOT LET THE PRIESTS, FOR ONE MOMENT, THINK THAT THEY WILL COME IN THROUGH THE ENTRANCE INTO THE COURT OF THE TABERNACLE, that they will go straight to the altar and make an offering thereon. That they may go straight into the Holy Place, or the case of the High Priest, into the Most Holy Place, unless they wash first. The cleansing must be done. And so the Lord presses home this point to His disciples in chapter 13 of John and verse 10.

But, notice in verse 11 He makes the point, 'ye are not all clean'. Why not? The illusion is very clearly to Judas Iscariot, but then, had not his feet also been washed with the others? Undoubtedly! But he lacked something that was very important, that was going to begin to work very, very strongly in the other eleven; and that is that he was not washed within, thereby demonstrating that the Lord's usage of the word 'clean', relates to a far deeper cleansing than the mere washing of feet. Judas' feet had been washed with the rest, but he was not clean in his heart, and so thereby we are reminded that the outward ritual of conforming to divine worship, is not of itself of any value, unless there is also, the inner cleansing. We may go week by week to assemble before the Lord's table, and partake of the bread and the wine. We may be active in ecclesial affairs, but unless that Word moves us and operates upon us, and transforms us after the likeness of the Son of God, then it is a mere outward ritual, is it not? And therefore, an inner cleansing has not taken place. And so the Lord is indicating that when He comes into His kingdom, He will not sit down to eat in His kingdom, with men and women who are not washed and cleansed, IN HEART.

We might just hold our hand in John 13 and turn over momentarily to Psalm 24, which is a psalm with which I'm sure we're quite familiar, but let's renew these words in our mind once again, because they fit precisely the needs of John chapter 13 and verse 11. For in Psalm 24 and verses 3 to 5 we read, 'Who shall ascend into the hill of Yahweh? or who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from Yahweh, and righteousness from the God of his salvation'. Those words are not demanding the moral perfection that was manifested in the Son of God, for if that was so, the Lord Jesus Christ would find Himself a very lonely man in the kingdom of God. Those words refer to a 'disposition'; a disposition of self surrender, and the character of Christ might be developed in the hearts and minds and in the lives of men and women, and their lives might be dedicated to serving their Lord and serving their God, and serving their brethren. That they might have the disposition of Christ without ever being able to attain to the perfection of His character. And so, we ourselves are constantly 'staining our walk in the truth', like someone walking the streets of Judaea in the days of the Lord, and therefore, we need the constant 'cleansing' that we have through the intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ, as our High Priest and our Mediator. We need the constant cleansing of the washing of the water by the Word.

So, with these things having been set forth before the disciples, we read in verse 12, 'So after He had washed their feet, and had taken His garments, and was set down again, He said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?' So, having completed the exercise, the Lord now points out, that He has been illustrating a lesson that had to be learned. And He has illustrated the meaning of that lesson in verse 10, but He will go a little further yet. The word 'know' here is the word 'ginosko', the same as the second word 'know' in verse 7 that we examined yesterday evening. So that the Lord is saying here in verse 12, 'Do you have a true personal and intimate knowledge of what I have just been doing to you?' And you'll note that the Lord's question was received in silence. Who could answer? They couldn't really answer could they? Even Peter is now totally silenced and listening very carefully to the further words of the Lord.

So, in verse 13 He says, 'Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am'. So here are words that they used in their form of address to Him. They called Him 'Rabbi' (teacher); they called Him 'Teacher' they called Him 'Master' they called Him 'Lord'. You do know one thing in all the gospels you will find that they never called Him; they never, ever called Him 'Jesus'. Search the gospels, you won't find it. The immediate twelve, who were the closest of all men to the Son of God, never observed that form of familiarity. They never called Him Jesus, they called Him, Rabbi or Teacher or Master or Lord. He was the One, for whom they had learned the truth; the One who they acknowledged as their Lord, so therefore, should they not honour Him but obeying His teaching? That's His point.

Verse 14, 'If I being your Lord and Master have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.' Ye ought to wash one another's feet. Does He mean they should all go around, taking it in turns, and doing exactly to each other that which He has done,

on kind of a roster basis? Well, of course he doesn't mean that at all. The word 'ought' is a very important word. And you know, brethren and sisters, as we study our bibles, we very often find, that the words that are just very little words in our English language like 'and' and 'but' and 'ought' etc. are very often extremely important words. Here is such a case, because the word 'ought' here, is a word which signifies 'to owe someone' 'to be indebted' and then 'to be bound to an obligation'. So you see, this is the language of a relationship between a bond slave and his master. He has shown them and demonstrated to them, the attitude and the action of a 'bond slave'. And a bond slave is bound by 'indebtedness and obligation' to his master to his owner. And in a very real sense, these men gathered together in this Upper Room, are in a 'debt of love and sacrifice' to their Lord, that they could never really repay, ever. But in return, for what He had done for them, they could discharge that debt by serving one another in the spirit of the truth. That is what the Lord is saying in verse 14, 'you owe one another, you are indebted to one another, you are bound by a obligation to one another, to wash one another's feet. And He's not really talking about feet is He? He's talking about the washing one another, with a 'cleansing power of the Word of God', the Word of truth, so therefore, Christ's disciples must be ready always, to humbly serve one another, with the objective that we may bring the 'cleansing influence of the Word of God' to affect one another. And every time we do this we are following in the footsteps of Christ. We are following His example. He has said 'I have given you an example', and that's what follows in verse 15. 'I have given you an example', but you know in regard to that word, Westcott in his commentary in regard the significance of this word, says that 'the example of Christ is always offered in connection with some form of self sacrifice. ALWAYS! Whenever we read of Christ's example, is it always in relation to a sacrifice on His part. His example always costs Him something; and needless to say, the Lord has never, ever called upon His disciples to perform anything which He Himself has not already first done. He doesn't ask us to do anything that He hasn't already done Himself. And therefore, He says in verse 15, 'I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you', and He is referring, not merely to the washing of feet, surely the 3-1/2 years that they had walked with Him, was His example to which He here, refers.

Here He is on this last night that He would be with them before His death, and here He is showing them in the washing of their feet, an example that summarized His entire ministry together with Him. As spirit of self effacing, self-sacrificing service, and that needs to be linked with verse 34 of this chapter. So if you are making a note, make a note against verse 15 to compare with verse 34. And we shall see that in a moment, God willing, when we come to it.

And so in verse 16, He makes the point, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither He that is sent greater than He that sent Him'. The word 'sent' is like a 'play on words' because it is the Greek word 'apostolos' and it means 'one sent', and as the Lord Jesus Christ was 'sent' by God and in Hebrews, the word 'apostle' is used of the Lord Jesus Christ. He, Himself, was an apostle in that He had been sent from God; and these men, re-invigorated, re-equipped, been enlightened and increasing day by day, their understanding and their grasp of the Lord's ministry, and His work

and His labour among them. His ministry of sacrifice before God and humble obedience to the will of His Father, day by day, is taking deeper root in the hearts of these men, because the Lord knew that they were susceptible to the Word of God. And that the Word of God would change them and transform them, and make them into men, worthy to be princes over the 12 tribes of Israel in the kingdom of God. HE KNEW THAT! He knew what was in them. The thing that He did also know was that, that had to be brought out. That before it could be brought out, it had to be put in. There was nothing in us, of our own nature, of our own selves, that is of any profitable value in the service of God or the service of our Lord. It is only that which comes out of the Word and goes into us, and motivates our thinking, our intelligence, our mode of life and living, that will change us and fill us, for the kingdom of God. How important it was that the Lord should say to them, 'for I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you'.

And what had He done to them? He had not merely washed their feet, for 3-1/2 years He had led them, He had taught them, He had shown them, He had revealed to them the fact that He was indeed, the WORD MADE FLESH. So He says, 'neither is He that was sent greater than He that sent Him', thereby giving us a further example of His own humble submission to His God. Because, He, Himself, was a bond slave although He was a Son. He was a bond slave to His Father, that He might totally fulfill the Father's purpose in Him. And now, these men were to become His bond slaves and to understand what it means to voluntarily give up one's freedom to be bound to a Master, Who is the most wonderful, the most wise, the most loving, the most kind, the most generous Master that any bond slave could ever have. No wonder the Law of Moses made allowance for a slave who was to be released at a certain time and deciding that he did not want to leave his master's house. And the Law made provision for that; for the slave to go to his master and say, 'look, I know that I'm now due for release having served my time with you, but I wish to remain because I find you a kind, loving, gentle, helpful, warm, affectionate, loving master. I do not wish to leave your house, I wish to stay for the rest of my life'. And the Law provided for that master to take that bond slave and to take him to the door post, and to take an awl and to bore a hole through the lobe of the ear. And the lesson there is very clear, that throughout the rest of his life that bond slave would continue to give his ear, to hear the voice of his master: TO HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAYETH UNTO THE ECCLESIAS. That is the voice of God coming to us, and we ourselves have surrendered that freedom. We've done it voluntarily. Nobody took us in a hold and forced us into the waters of baptism. That we did freely; we did joyfully; we did gladly; but we did so, willing to surrender up our own lives, and become for life, not only brethren of the Lord Jesus Christ but also His bond slaves, bound to Him by the chain of the truth. And may it never be broken! May it never be broken.

And so, we indeed, are to be His humble servants and bond slaves, and so in verse 17 He says to them, 'If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye DO them'. So we have to know, by personal and intimate experience, but in addition to that, brethren and sisters, apart from the knowledge gained through a personal, intimate experience with our knowledge of the Son of God, as He says here, we must do the things that He has

taught. And you know, John never forgot that. Keeping a hand in John 13, if you come back with me to the 1 epistle of John, just to look at a couple of references here, of the way in which this lesson, was borne in upon John in a way that he never forgot, ever, the incidents that took place, and the lessons that were taught in the Upper Room.

In 1 John chapter 2 and at verse 6, 'He that sayeth he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked'. In chapter 3 verses 16 to 18, 'Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He (that is Jesus) laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth'. And in chapter 4 and verse 11, 'Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another'. Those are just some of the examples of the way in which John never forgot those lessons that were conveyed to those men in the Upper Room. And we ourselves also, like John, must recognize the power and the importance of those words, and that it is not enough that they should have 'ginosko' knowledge of these wonderful principles. The knowledge was of little value unless these men put their knowledge into practical operation among their brethren as we must also do.

And so, in verse 18, He goes back again to the one who was unclean. And this is very interesting, because it highlights the great knowledge and the perception that was known only by the Son of God, in relation to His fellow men. He says in verse 18, 'I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with Me hath lifted up his heel against Me'. Now, there He is quoting from Psalm 41 and verse 9. We're going to have a brief look at that, but as we do so, just remember this, that when David writes in Psalm 41 and verse 9, he is writing concerning Ahithophel. Ahithophel had been his great companion in the truth, a man of whom he writes in Psalm 55, 'that we took sweet counsel together'. We took sweet counsel together in the things of God, and a man of whom it is written in 2 Samuel chapter 16 and verse 23 that 'when he spoke it was as 'the oracles of God'. It's also as if saying that Ahithophel was like 'the word made flesh'. He had an astonishing knowledge of the Word of God, but Ahithophel had one great weakness that destroyed him. It was his granddaughter Bathsheba. And when David took Bathsheba, unlawfully, quite ruthlessly, and unthinking of the consequences, Ahithophel never forgot that. And he allowed himself to be 'eaten out with bitterness' against David, and that bitterness eventually destroyed Ahithophel. Whatever we do brethren and sisters, we must not permit our lives to become destroyed by bitterness against any of our brethren. And so, David in Psalm 41 and verse 9, writes the words which the Lord quotes in John 13, 'yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me'. But you notice in John 13, that the Lord does not quote the entire verse; the words, 'my own familiar friend, in whom I trusted' are omitted by the Lord Jesus Christ, in reference to Judas Iscariot. Judas Iscariot was not the familiar friend of the Lord, that Ahithophel had been to David, because the Lord knew all along what was in the heart of Judas Iscariot. He knew what sort of a man he was; he knew that he was a man of ambition; a man who desired wealth and position and

power. And that he put those things above Godly considerations such as self-sacrifice and the development of a righteous character. The Lord does not quote the words 'in whom I trusted', because He never, ever, did trust Judas Iscariot. You see, that was the difference between the Lord Jesus Christ and David.

The name 'Ahithopel' means 'brother of folly' which is a strange name for a man who was so greatly and well versed in the scriptures of truth, and yet it turned out to be, a description of what he really was, 'a brother of folly' because in the end, he let the Word of God go; he let his hope of eternal salvation 'go', when he threw in his lot with Absalom, whose intention was to kill David and seize the throne. And when Ahithopel's advice was not taken, he did the same thing that Judas Iscariot did. He returned to his home and he set his house in order and he hanged himself, because he knew that he had betrayed David. But, above all else, he knew he had betrayed his God, and there was nothing else left for him in life, except the agony of day after day after day, perhaps years, of living with that knowledge of betrayal, and he couldn't face that anymore than could Judas Iscariot. And so both of them hanged themselves. Why did they do that? Because they refused to humble themselves before their God. They were dominated by pride. They were dominated by self interest, by all those very elements of natural man that are totally opposed to the spirit of Christ. And so, 'he has lifted up his heel against Me', is what the Lord says, and it is very interesting that in the psalm that we have just referred to, the word 'heel' is exactly the same word as in Genesis 3 verse 15. So you see, here is one of those mental processes wherein a man who can know the truth and understand the truth, cannot only betray it, but reverse the principle of Genesis 3 and verse 15.

Instead of betraying and turning upon sin, to turn and betray the One whom God hath sent, for our salvation. And that is the serpent thinking which endeavours to crush the head of the spirit thinking. And so the Lord goes on in these verses, and the Lord is asked, 'Who is the one who is to betray Him?' and we learn here that John is the only one to discover this truth, and this becomes very profound in John's life from this point on. Notice in verse 23, 'Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved'; this was John. 'Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom He spake. He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto Him, 'Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, He it is to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when He had dipped the sop, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon'. And so John knew, and we'll see something of that in just a moment.

'After the sop, Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, 'That thou doest, do quickly'. And by stating as John does 'that then Satan entered into him', it is a way of saying that the mind of the flesh, already predetermined on this course, now began to become active. As Judas Iscariot rose from his seat and slipped quietly from that room, and he's not seen again, in the presence of Christ and the rest of the apostles. He's not seen again, so when the Lord says to him, 'that thou doest, do quickly' we must understand what He means. It was not that the Lord wanted it over and done with as quickly as possible, because the Lord knew very carefully, that step by step, in the last hours of His life, everything had to unfold according to a predetermined timetable. He

knew that He had to die upon that stake, at the very hour when Israel should have been slaying the Passover lamb.

It was the Passover, and He was the true Passover Lamb. So everything that was done, had to be carefully guided and controlled. The six trials that the Lord underwent, the beatings, the scourgings, the traveling from one part of the city to another, and finally, the last journey of all, to Calvary's Hill. And here is the Lord, carefully timing all that should be done, and He was aware of the time, that's why He says to Judas, 'that thou doest do quickly', in other words, do not mess around; you know what you've got to do. Go out and do it! You'd think the Lord would want to delay it, wouldn't you? But, He knew that everything had to be done in the exact order. And all those things came to bear on John's mind, because you see, in verse 30 it says 'He then having received the sop went immediately out: AND IT WAS NIGHT.'

Now, all four gospel accounts make some reference to this occasion, to this night, but only John says, IT WAS NIGHT. No one else says that. And it was given to John to understand clearly the metaphorical significance of 'light and darkness'. We see it in his gospel again and again, in chapter 1 verse 5, in chapter 8 verse 12, in chapter 11 verse 10, in chapter 12 verse 35 and verse 46, and we see in his first epistle, particularly, the contrast between light and darkness. **GOD IS LIGHT AND IN HIM IS NO DARKNESS AT ALL,** and the Lord says 'I am the Light of the World'. Why? Because He was the **WORD MADE FLESH, AND LIGHT IS ASSOCIATED WITH TRUTH AND GODLINESS,** but those that betrayed Christ, walk in darkness. Having repudiated the light of the truth of God, only John says that 'it was night'. And so Judas went forth and he sold his Master for 30 pieces of silver, the legal value of a common bond slave. And his Lord and Master had just illustrated to him, through the washing of the feet, with a bowl and a pitcher of water, and the towel around Himself; He had illustrated to Judas Iscariot the principles of the life of a bond slave, in willing submission, to the needs of others, and the purpose of God. And Judas sold his Lord for that price. And so Judas is the great illustration of a man who seeks to use Christ, rather than to be used by Him. He was ambitious, for power and authority, which he thought would be his in the kingdom, and he remained unheeding of the power which Christ's teaching should have had upon him.

And so here we enter, into a new phase in the Upper Room. From chapter 13 verse 31 to chapter 14 verse 31, and herein the Lord announces His impending departure from them. He is to be taken, crucified, raised up, and then to ascend into the heavens to the right hand of the Father. He Himself was well aware that the time for these events has now arrived. Back to chapter 13 and verse 1, 'Now before the feast of the Passover when Jesus knew that His hour was come'. **HE KNEW THAT,** but now, he must endeavour to calmly and gently, make these important things known to His disciples. And so when we look at verse 31, 'When he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him', He means the last stage and His walk toward Calvary's Hill was now beginning. So, with the departure of Judas from the little group in the Upper Room, the final phase of Christ's mission, had begun, and in sending forth Judas Iscariot, in verse 27, the Lord had delivered HIMSELF into the hands of



men. The seed of the serpent, now about to 'bruise' the heel of the 'seed of the woman'. He had now delivered Himself, because He had said to Judas Iscariot 'that thou doest do quickly'. He did not turn around to Judas and say, 'Look, I know what's in your heart; I know what's in your mind; I know what you're planning to do. DON'T DO IT! Please, I beg you, I don't want to die in that way. Don't do it'. HE SAYS THE VERY REVERSE, with calm, quiet resignation, as He says in John chapter 10, 'He had a commandment of His Father to lay down His life', and don't let us think for one second, that He ever thought of changing that commandment, or asking that it might be broken. He says he has a commandment of My Father to lay down My life. He knew that!

In Isaiah 50 that we read on Saturday evening says, 'that He set His face like a flint (verse 7)'; not half a flint, like a flint. He knew what His destiny was and He knew that all hope for the future of the human race, depended upon His total willing obedience to His Father. And so, although He had a commandment from His Father, He was willing, in His self surrender and His submission. So in verse 27 we must understand, here is the Lord telling Judas to 'go ahead and do it. Go out and sell Me, says the Son of God, I know what you're going to do. Go and do it'.

But, you know, brethren and sisters, that we have further proof of that, and again, it is an incident recorded only in John's gospel. If you turn with me for a moment to chapter 18 and verses 4, 5 and 6, remember when they came out to take Him? To arrest Him? in verse 3, 'Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon Him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered Him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am He. And Judas also, which betrayed Him, stood with them. As soon then as He had said unto them, I am He, they went backward, and fell to the ground'. Astonishing, the whole lot of them, 'they went backward and fell to the ground', and there are all of these men, Judas and these bunch of hoods that he's got together to come out and take an innocent man. They're all lying in the mud on the ground. Arms and legs everywhere; flat on their backs. IT WAS A MIRACLE THAT THAT HAPPENED; it was no accident. And while they're trying to sort themselves out, there was a willing opportunity there, an opening, oh! such an opening, in the darkness of the night, in Gethsemane, for the Lord to simply turn and slip away through the bushes and be gone and never to be seen again. To hide for the rest of His life, in the hills and the caves of the wilderness of Judaea. But while they stood there, shakily, bringing themselves to their feet, the whole time, the Lord had just calmly stood His ground and waited for them, to again, gather themselves together, to reach out and take Him, and to drag Him away. THAT WAS WILLING SUBMISSION, the same as we have in chapter 13 and verse 27, but far more dramatic.

And so in verse 33 of John chapter 13, the Lord says, 'Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. A new commandment I give unto you' (we'll look at that in just a moment). Verse 33, 'little children', do you know that that is the only time Christ ever used that expression. The only time! Why? Because, He is now about to set

forth a series of vital and intimate principles by which His disciples must live. And the expression itself, little children, reveals a gentle recognition of their utter inability to stand alone, without the guiding hand of their Lord upon them. Only He could give them the guidance; and that principle applies today to the disciples of Christ, as it has in every age. We need His guiding hand, we need His guiding voice, we need His guiding direction, we need the words and the wisdom of the Son of God. Recognizing that in ourselves, we are utterly incompetent to handle the things of the truth, without the wise counsel and leadership of our Head, the Lord Jesus Christ. And as the Lord utters these words, 'little children, yet a little while I am with you'; a cloud of gloom and despondency had settled upon that little gathering, as they lay around the table in that Upper Room. Listening with deepening concerns to these words, because you see, their hopes and excitement concerning the early re-establishment of the kingdom of Israel, seems to be slipping away from them with every passing minute. They can begin to see something clearer, and it's not about the great victory that they're going to gain over the Romans. It's not about how many arms they've got stored away that the Lord has got hidden that He's never told them about before, and how these are going to be made available to the people. They're going to arm the people; they're going to storm the Romans; they've got to fight them to a standstill; they've got to win the land from the Romans; they've got to re-establish the throne of David. NOT A WORD! Everything is in a completely opposite direction, and the disciples are struggling to come to grips with this, and you see in verse 34 and 35, we find that already, this little ecclesia, as we might call it at this point, was divided, because Judas had gone out from among them, in proof of the fact, that he's not 'of them', and there would be difficult times ahead for the disciples. Not only in that generation but all succeeding generations down through the ages until the Lord should return, to resolve all the problems and dispose of all the weaknesses and the difficulties.

So, He says, 'you are My children'; I'm your spiritual Father. Look upon Me, and you will see our heavenly Father in My character. And as you all look together, the Lord is saying as you all look together, stand together, look toward Me, and you cling together and unite together. DO NOT LET THE PRESSURES OF AN EVIL, CORRUPT WORLD, do not let jealousies, enmities, envyings or strife divide you and tear you asunder. Be moved by the Spirit of the truth and be moved toward each other, and be moved toward Me. And that is why He says in verse 34, 'A new commandment I give you that ye love one another', and what does that mean?

Why is it termed 'a new commandment'? Because the word 'new' certainly means that. It is a very powerful word. According to Boulanger in his Greek lexicon, he says the word means 'newly made'; not merely recent but different from that which had been formerly. Really and truly a 'new' commandment. But, what does it mean? Because the commandment to love one's neighbour was not new, but this was different because it did not merely say 'thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself'. The new commandment is 'love one another as I have loved you'. The self-sacrificing disposition of a bond slave. LOVE ONE ANOTHER - How? What's the example? How are we to love one another? Christ says 'as I have loved you' and He may well have added as He did in Mount Olivet, as Paul says in Ephesians, 'and as He gave Himself for us'.

And so in verse 35 He tells them that they can take comfort in the fact that 'all men will know that they are indeed Christ's disciples', and all men would know that when they saw those disciples develop within themselves, the moral attributes of Christ's character. And those attributes would be seen in these men as the word began to grow in them and become greater and greater and gradually take off and grow like a tree, as Paul says in Colossians 'they would be rooted and grounded in the fight', in a way that would shake none of them.

And so in verse 37, Peter said unto Him, 'Lord, why cannot I follow Thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake. Here is a humble Peter now, but still willing and ready to speak. Lord, why cannot I follow Thee now? But you know, giving Peter full credit for that wonderful question, that beautiful question, we have also to concede, brethren and sisters, that anyone can say that. They're very fine words, but what Peter had to learn, was that those words were meaningless without the action that would accompany them. You see, Peter says 'Lord, why cannot I follow thee now?' And the answer is that Peter was not ready. He was not sufficiently spiritually developed, he did not have the sense of maturity and understanding, and he had not yet learned to practice the Lord's life in the way that he was to do afterwards. And so the Lord answers his question very beautifully and very gently in verse 38.

Jesus answered him, 'Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake?' He knew that Peter would do that. He knew that Peter would be willing to do it. 'Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou shalt deny Me thrice'. Peter had to learn that, but you see, just before that, notice verse 35. 'By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another. Simon Peter said unto him Lord, whither goest thou? Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now.' Then, we have Peter's question, 'Why can't I follow you now?' The Lord says, 'Whither I go thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow Me afterwards'. Afterwards? What does He mean by 'afterwards'? Does He mean 'after I have died?' He means in the nature of his death, thou shalt follow Me afterwards. After what? After Peter had thoroughly learned and understood what the truth was all about, what it meant to 'follow Christ'. It did not mean to follow Christ, to walk out of that room and to lay down his life in battle, in the name of Christ. To follow Christ meant to follow in His steps, to develop the character of the Son of God in His life. But afterward, Peter would indeed, lay down his life. The Lord had told him, in the end of John, John 21, 'that they shall take thee and stretch forth thine arms, and thou shalt be taken to a way that thou knowest not'. In John chapter 21 and verse 18, 'Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands'. THOU SHALT STRETCH FORTH THY HANDS, the action of one about to be crucified. 'Thou shalt stretch forth thy hands and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake the Lord Jesus Christ signifying by what death he should glorify God'. But before that, Peter was to learn to follow the footsteps of His Lord.

And now the Lord becomes very well aware of their great need. They need to be

comforted; they need to be strengthened; they need to be encouraged. And so, in our next study we turn our attention to John chapter 14, where really there is no break in thought from the previous chapter, and therefore, ideally there should be no chapter division at this point, as the Lord says, 'Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe into God; believe also into Me. In My Father's house are many abiding places. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you'. And with those words He begins to encourage them, and to bring them together, and to fill their hearts and minds with a hope that went far beyond that present day, with an immediate look for restoration of the throne of David and the kingdom of Israel, that made them look forward to all eternity, in the glorious company of their Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. And brethren and sisters, He will encourage us and strengthen us and comfort us with these same words.