

John 13 sets the stage for the entire Farwell Discourse (John 13:31-16:33). The time marker is “before the Feast of Passover” (Jn. 13:1).

The chronology of the last supper in the gospels is somewhat problematic. The evidence in John seems to point to this being Wednesday night, for the next morning, the morning of Jesus’ trial, is called the day of preparation. That is, it is the day when the lambs were slain and preparations were made for the Passover feast (Jn. 18:28, 39; 19:14, 31, 36, 42; Kent, 164). This would mean that Jesus was crucified on Thursday between 3 and 5 p.m. when the Passover lamb was offered. The other gospels, however (especially Mark 14:12), identify the last supper as the Passover meal. This would then be Thursday evening after the Passover lamb had been sacrificed (Kostenberger, 400). Jesus’ crucifixion would be on Friday.

The chronological issues are too complex to evaluate here (see Essay 10 on page 320 in *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Thomas and Gundry; Carson, 455ff.; Brown II, 555), but various views will be given when they apply to this issue.

A shift has taken place in Jesus’ ministry. In chapters 1-12 Jesus was directing His efforts toward the nation of Israel; now His ministry in the upper room is directed toward the disciples.

13:1 Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

13:2 During supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him,

13:3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God and was going back to God,

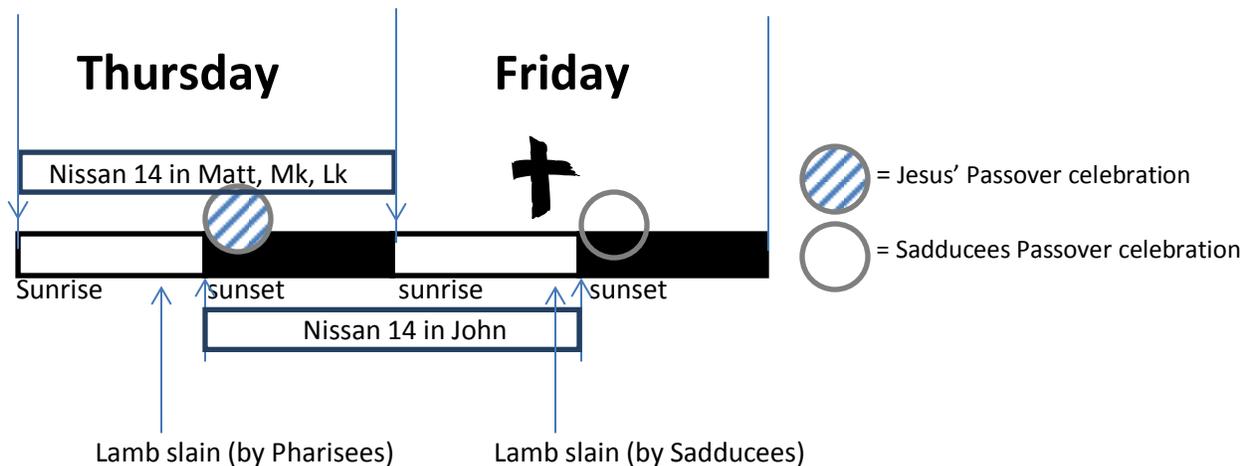
13:4 got up from supper, and laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself.

13:5 Then He poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.

“Before the Passover” could mean:

- that chapter 13 is not the Passover meal and the events recorded here happened the day before the Passover (Kent, 164)
- that this is the evening meal prior to the Passover celebration that would take place later that night (Carson, 460)
- that Jesus and His disciples celebrated their own Passover meal the day before the actual Passover took place (Bruce, 279)
- that John and the other gospel writer viewed the calendar dates from different perspectives. The synoptic gospels viewed each day from sunrise to sunrise, while John viewed the events from the standpoint of the Sadducees who controlled the temple and identified a day from

sunset to sunset; unlike the Pharisees and other Jews, they didn't celebrate Passover until sunset of the next day (Thomas/Gundry, *A Harmony of the Gospels*, 321-322).



John introduces the occasion by telling the readers that Jesus had a consciousness of a divine identity. Jesus knew that the hour of His suffering and death had come (cf. Jn. 12:23; 13:1), and that He would soon depart from the world to return to His Father. He also knew of His heavenly origin and that He had authority over all things. He even knew that Judas would betray Him, but instead of casting him out, Jesus girded Himself with a towel and washed the disciples' feet, including the feet of the betrayer.

In the bigger context, the first three verses set the stage that connects the footwashing with the death of Jesus. Genesis 3:15 had predicted that One would come who would crush the head of the serpent, but the serpent would bruise His heel. Jesus knew that the forces of darkness had been set in motion that would lead to His crucifixion. The serpent was near, in the very room with Him. It is then that He rises to wash the disciples' feet.

Culturally, footwashing was a custom practiced by the Jews. Normally, a servant washed the feet of his master, or a hostess that of her guests when they entered the home. The task was reserved for those of lowly positions and was bestowed upon superiors. The disciples would have never considered washing each other's feet. The fact that this footwashing took place *during the meal* indicates that it was not simply as an act of courtesy, but was done deliberately with a specific purpose in mind (Morris, 612).

John 13:1-17 results in quite a discussion among commentators. At first glance, the text itself seems to be disjointed. As a result, liberal scholars suggest that John 13 is really two different interpretations of the same event merged into one story – and done rather poorly at that. Others see the footwashing as latent with spiritual symbolism (Jn. 3:3, 4-5, 6-10, 21-30), while some interpret it solely as a moral lesson on humility (Jn. 3:1-2, 4-5, 12-15, 17-19). Still others see the singular event teaching both a spiritual and moral lesson.

Verses 6-11 interpret the act of footwashing.

13:6 So He came to Simon Peter. He said to Him, "Lord, do You wash my feet?"

13:7 Jesus answered and said to him, "What I do you do not realize now, but you will understand afterward."

Peter's objection in verse 6 prepares the way for the theological explanation of the event.

Peter thought He understood what Jesus was doing and concluded that it was totally incongruous with the position Jesus held. He was the Lord; they were His disciples. If anything, they should wash His feet! (Jn. 12:3) Seeing the Master perform such a humbling task was unbearable and Peter refused to allow it to happen to him.

When Jesus tells Peter that he did *not* understand what He was doing, He had to have meant that the footwashing was different than what Peter was thinking. It was not just an act of humility. It was not just the oriental custom. It was something that needed *interpretation* beyond the obvious. It meant more than what it outwardly appeared to be. Understanding would come afterward.

"Afterward" could be any time after the event, but it was most likely the time after Jesus' death and resurrection (see 2:22; 8:28; 12:16; 13:19; 14:26, 29; 20:9 for similar comments; Bruce, 281). Note what the following authors say:

- "As the disciples cannot yet understand how the one who they venerate as the Messiah must go to the cross, so they cannot understand the symbol laden acts that anticipate it" (Carson, 463).
- "Not until His death and resurrection had taken place could Peter and his companions realize that this was what was meant" (Bruce, 281).
- ". . . the words of Jesus in verses 12-15 required the cross and resurrection and increasing illumination by the Holy Spirit to bring out their full significance" (Beasley-Murray, 233)
- "In itself the phrase is vague, but the meaning is probably the same as in 12:16: 'At first the disciples did not understand *these things*; but *when Jesus had been glorified*, then they recalled that it was precisely *these things* that had been written about Him and *these things* they had done to Him.'" (Brown II, 552).

Tenney summarizes these verses well:

The colloquy between Jesus and Peter was illustrative of a principle deeper than the mere argument over social standing. Peter's protest against Jesus' washing his feet was prompted by shame, for he deemed it unfitting that the Master should wash the feet of a disciple. Jesus'

answer, "What I do thou knowest not now: but thou shall understand hereafter" (7) and "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me" (8), disclose a spiritual significance which Peter did not see. Later the meaning would be intelligible in light of the cross which provided cleansing for all men, without which no one could have a part in the heritage of the saints" (Tenney, 199).

"The narrative progresses on the basis that the true meaning of what is taking place has yet to become clear and this further encourages a symbolic understanding of the footwashing" (Gibson).

13:8 Peter said to Him, "Never shall You wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."

13:9 Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, then wash not only my feet, but also my hands and my head."

Peter still doesn't understand what Jesus is talking about. He is thinking on a literal level of social custom with all the implications tied to it. He ignores the promise of future understanding and emphatically expresses his refusal to have his feet washed: "Never shall You wash my feet!"

Jesus' response is that if Peter refuses, he will have no part with Him. If Jesus' act of footwashing was merely an act of humility, His response (Jn.13:8) would sound petty and rigid (Carson, 463). It would sound like, "I command you to let Me be humble or I won't be your friend!" But once it is understood that the symbolism refers to spiritual cleansing, Jesus' words, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me," are far from petty.

To "have part" or "a share" in (TDNT IV, 595) something is regularly used with respect to inheritance and in Jewish thought can refer to taking part in the promised blessings of God or in judgment (Beasley/Murray 234, Carson, 464; Brown II, 256). Consider how the word is used in the following verses where this same Greek word appears:

- Matthew 24:51: assign him a **place** (a part) with the hypocrites; in that place (that part) there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.
- Luke 12:46: assign him a **place** (a part) with the unbelievers.
- Revelation 20:6: Blessed and holy is the one who has a **part** in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power,
- Revelation 21:8: But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their **part** will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

Some examples of what it means to have "a part" with Jesus are found in John 14:1-3 and 17:24:

John 14:1 "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.

2 In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.

3 If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also."

John 17:24 "Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world."

Though Peter did not understand completely, he knew he didn't want to be separated from Jesus. If allowing Christ to wash his feet would mean that he would have a part with Him, Peter assumed that a complete washing would be even better (Jn. 13:9; Carson, 464).

13:10 Jesus said to him, "He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you."

13:11 For He knew the one who was betraying Him; for this reason He said, "Not all of you are clean."

Jesus replied, "He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." (Jn. 13:10). Jesus' words have a double meaning (Brown II, 552). They could be understood in light of the oriental custom. When people took a bath they were clean, but as they traveled the dusty roads their feet became soiled and it became necessary to wash them again. They didn't need an entire bath all over again; all they needed was their feet to be washed. But we have already been informed that there is a different meaning to the washing. What would the spiritual significance of this then be?

Verse 11 tells us what Jesus means by "clean;" it means to be saved, to be cleansed from sin. Although Jesus had not yet died, He had said, "*he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life*" (Jn. 5:24; I Jn. 5:13; 2:25; Titus 3:5). All the disciples had believed and were made clean—all but Judas, the betrayer. That is why Jesus had said, "you are clean, but not all of you." The anticipation of Jesus' death alluded to in verses 1-3 was now spoken of as cleansing from sin and pictured in the footwashing.

But in what sense did the one who had been cleansed (had a bath) still need cleansing (need his feet washed)?

The once-for-all bathing is "the initial cancellation of sin and cleansing from guilt which is received in regeneration, while the repeated washing of the feet corresponds to the regular removal of incidental defilement of conscience by confession to God and the guarding of one's way according to His word" (Ps. 119:9; Bruce, 282). As Carson says, "Individuals who have been cleansed by Christ's atoning work will doubtless need to have subsequent sins washed away, but the fundamental cleansing can never be

repeated” (Carson, 645). Piper says it like this: “When a person believes in Jesus he is completely cleansed . . . The repeated washing of the feet represents our daily confession of sin and turning to Jesus for ongoing application of what He accomplished at the cross — our cleansing and forgiveness” (Piper, desiringGod.org). Or as Tenney states, “The essential uncleanness of the whole man might be removed once for all, but a constant cleansing was also necessary to remove the incidental defilement resulting from the causal contacts of life. The washing of the feet was typical of the daily purification of the soul from the travel stains of pilgrimage” (Tenney, 200). Without an initial and a daily cleansing, men would not have a part with Jesus.

These verses also show that the footwashing was symbolic. Jesus wasn’t saying that Judas needed to practice better hygiene, but that he needed a spiritual cleansing. “The uncleanness of Judas . . . was not in his feet but in his heart” (Tenney, 200). “The action of Jesus is parabolic of the greater cleansing that He is about to achieve through His redemptive death” (Beasley/Murray, 234). The repeated washing of the feet pictured the ongoing application of the cross to our lives.

The above interpretation (with slight variations) is well supported by many scholars.

13:12 So when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments and reclined at the table again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you?"

As we progress to verse 12, it appears that there is no change in subject. “So when” suggests a continuation of verses 1-11, mention of the garments links this event to what has preceded (Jn. 13:4), and washing of feet carries the symbolic act just performed forward.

Therefore, when Jesus asks, “Do you know what I have done?” we would assume that they did not. They had first thought that He was performing the oriental custom and had humbly washed their feet, but Jesus had told them that that was not what He was doing and that understanding would come later (13:7).

The difficulty arises in what follows. Jesus goes on to explain what He did, but it is hard to see anything that resembles the symbolism of cleansing found in the first 11 verses.

As has been mentioned, it is due to this abrupt change that some liberal scholars think John 13 must be an edited version of two stories that interpret the footwashing differently. If Jesus is now teaching about servanthood, the change is completely unexpected. He had just rebuked Peter for interpreting His action as an act of humility, and tied his refusal to have his feet washed with the possibility of losing his future inheritance with Jesus. Furthermore, Jesus explained that what He was doing wouldn’t be understood until (presumably) after His death and resurrection. If Jesus is using footwashing to teach about humility, He appears to be reversing both the meaning of His action in verses 1-12, and the comment that what He was doing was understandable.

13:13 "You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am.

13:14 If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.

13:15 For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.

Taken at face value, Jesus is telling the disciples that they need to wash each other's feet as He did to them, for He is their teacher and Lord. Jesus' action was a pattern to follow.

At this point we reach a crossroad in interpretation. What is He telling them to do?

- Is Jesus telling the disciples to literally wash each other's feet as a practice to remember their need of daily cleansing from sin (13:10)?
- Is He introducing a second application to the footwashing, namely, the need to practice servanthood or humility?
- Is Jesus telling His disciples that they need to be devoted to each other in the cleansing process from daily sin?
- Or, Is Jesus telling them to do a combination of these things?

Due to space and time only two of the above options will be considered.

One possibility is that Jesus is giving a second application to the symbolic action. In verses 1-12 He had used footwashing to illustrate the necessity of cleansing from sin. This could not be understood until after Jesus died and rose from the dead. But the same act displayed something else that He wanted them to learn, namely, the need of humility. In other words, in this interpretation, footwashing teaches both a spiritual truth and exemplifies humility and servanthood.

The cross and Jesus' servanthood come together elsewhere (Bruce, 283). Mark 10:45 says, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." Likewise, Philippians 2:5-8 says, "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross." This is a valid interpretation that is held by respected scholars; it is easy to understand, explains the text adequately, and has no serious objections against it.

A second option is to take these verses as *a command to wash each other's feet with the same symbolic significance that Jesus had already attached to the act*. Here are some reasons for this view:

1) First, this interpretation has the advantage of retaining the same meaning given to footwashing in verses 1-12. *This creates a greater continuity in the text*. There is no abrupt shift in subjects. In verses

1-12 Jesus' washing of the disciples' feet symbolized spiritual cleansing; in verses 13-17 the footwashing symbolizes the exact same thing. By washing each other's feet they were reminded of their need for cleansing as well. This is actually a very significant point that is usually glossed over.

2) Those who disagree with this view point out that Jesus said, "Do *as* I did" (13:15), not "Do *what* I did." The implication is that "as" (or, "just as" -- kathos, καθώς) means "act in a similar way" not "do exactly the same thing." But such a conclusion is premature. "As" isn't only used when referring to *similar* ideas, it also used to express exact equivalence. For example:

- Jn. 5:23: "All should honor the Son just *as* they honor the Father" means that the Father and the Son receive the exact same honor, not similar honor.
- Jn. 8:28: "I do nothing of Myself; but *as* My Father taught Me, I speak these things" means that Jesus said exactly what the Father said, not similar things. (also Jn. 12:49-50)
- Jn. 10:15: "As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father" means that Jesus and the Father know each other in exactly the same way, not in a similar way.

In other words, when Jesus said "do *as* I did to you," it is possible that He was speaking of doing the exact same thing that He did. "Exact correspondence" is within its semantic range of the meaning of the word "as".

3) Supporting this view, some have stated that the word example (*hupodeigma*, ὑπόδειγμα) refers to the repetition of an act, a "pattern" (Kostenberger, 408) to be copied (Kent, 168), or a model to be imitated. To underscore His meaning, Jesus added, "...that you also should do just as I have done to you" (verse 15b). Jesus washed the disciples' feet with literal water and wiped them with a literal towel. This is the copy, pattern, or model that His disciples are to follow.

Although the word does refer to something to be copied, the conclusion drawn from it can be seriously challenged. The noun "example" (*hupodeigma*, ὑπόδειγμα) only appears six times in the NT. John 13:15 is one of them. The other five places are listed below and in none of them does it mean to do exactly the same thing.

- James 5:10: "As an **example** (*hupodeigma*, ὑπόδειγμα) of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord . . ." In other words, the patience and experiences of suffering by the prophets provide an example for us when we go through *similar* experiences.
- II Peter 2:6: ". . . He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing them to ashes, having made them an **example** (*hupodeigma*, ὑπόδειγμα) to those who would live ungodly lives thereafter." Those who live ungodly lives will be punished. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah provides an occasion that *demonstrates* this; it is not intended to be not an exact equivalence of what will happen to all who sin as they did.

- Hebrews 4:11: “Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall through following the same example (*hupodeigma*, ὑπόδειγμα) of disobedience.” Israel’s failure in entering the Promised Land is a *picture* that warns us not to be disobedient lest we fail to enter into God’s rest.
- Hebrews 8:5: “They serve a copy (*hupodeigma*, ὑπόδειγμα) and shadow of the heavenly things. . .” Here “example” (*hupodeigma*, ὑπόδειγμα) is translated as “copy” and is synonymous to “shadow.”
- Hebrews 9:23: “Therefore it was necessary for the copies (*hupodeigma*, ὑπόδειγμα) of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these. . .” The “copies” are like the things in the heavenlies, but are not the same things.

There is no indication that “example” means exact correspondence. What is clear is that an example illustrates a truth to learn from. When Jesus washed the disciples’ feet, He also illustrated a truth to learn from. Whatever that truth is, it is to be done by believers to one-another. So the question remains: **in verses 13-17** was He illustrating humility, or the need of daily cleansing?

4) “Ought” of verse 14 is a word that expresses moral obligation; it means to be bound by duty or necessity. It communicates the idea of owing a debt. This force is admitted in every other case where the word is employed; for example, “Men ought always to pray” (Luke 18:1), “We ought to obey God” (Acts 5:29), “So ought men to love their wives as their own body” (Eph. 5:28), “we also ought to love one another” (1 John 4:11). The obligation that is specifically stated is washing one another’s feet.

Why are they to do this? The “for” of verse 15 gives the explanation. It is because Jesus is the model and they should do as He did to them. That is all that is necessary to know. If Jesus did it, then the disciples are morally obligated to do it.

In response to numbers 2 and 4 above, it should be pointed out that if Jesus is emphasizing the inward attitude behind the action, then “you also ought to wash one another’s feet” would simply mean something like “You ought to follow the same pattern of humility you see in Me. If I am humble enough to wash your feet, you should be willing to do the same!”

If practicing footwashing in the church today is an error, then the error is in not discerning the difference between what the Lord was doing literally, and the symbolic significance of the act. It would be taking an example of a first century cultural practice and making it a timeless truth. If Jesus is commanding His disciples to wash one another’s feet in order to remember the symbolism in verse 1-12, then failure to apply it is disobedience.

IS THIS AN ORDINANCE TO BE PRACTICED TODAY?

David Plaster says that a biblical ordinance “should be characterized by at least these three things: (1) a physical act which is ceremonial in nature, (2) a symbolic representation of a spiritual reality expressly taught in the NT, and (3) a command to perpetuate it by Christ or his apostles” (GTJ; 6:2. 1985, 425). Based on this definition, I personally think it is a mistake to be dogmatic in saying that Jesus is establishing *an ordinance*. The passage itself seems sufficiently vague to come to such a definitive conclusion. Though there is no doubt that Jesus is commanding His disciples to wash one another’s feet, it is difficult to prove that His intention is to perpetuate something ceremonial. In the verses in which the command appears (13:12-17) it is uncertain if He is emphasizing the same thing that He did in the earlier part of the chapter (13:6-9). Even among churches that practice footwashing there is disagreement about what it pictures. Some say it teaches humility, others the need of spiritual cleansing, and others say both. Tenney concludes that Jesus wants the disciples’ energy to “be devoted to the service and cleansing of one another . . . ” (Tenney, 201). The interpretation that sees footwashing as having more than one application (that is, it is symbolic of spiritual cleansing [vs. 6-9] and is a model of Christian humility [vs. 12-17]) is also sensible and based on sound reasoning. One should at least pause before raising something that only appears once in Scripture to a universal rite (Carson, 468).

That being said, I personally have not yet seen a rigorous rebuttal *from the text* itself that conclusively disproves the practice of footwashing and I see benefits in its practice even if it is not judged to be mandatory.

It is readily admitted that “the spiritual truth is greater than the form in which it is presented. However, certain forms or rituals are appropriate reminders of the larger truth they display” (Dwyer). Through footwashing Jesus emphasized the need for spiritual cleansing that is accomplished through His death. Furthermore, it is good to be reminded of the need of “our daily confession of sin and turning to Jesus for the ongoing application of what He accomplished at the cross”(Piper). As a practice, footwashing provides a tangible way to picture these truths; a way Jesus Himself used. If verses 13-17 are a secondary lesson stressing humility, footwashing would then remind us of our need in this as well.

As Dwyer has pointed out, footwashing, communion, and baptism create a complete picture of Christ’s life.

“The washing of His disciples’ feet depicts the humiliation of Christ in His condescension to become a man (Philippians 2:5-11). The Lord’s Supper (communion) paints a vivid picture of the sacrifice of His blood and body for our sins (1 Corinthians 11:24, 25). Baptism commemorates His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6:4). These are vital symbols of the redemptive role of Christ. They also exemplify the work of Christ within the life of the believer as he identifies with the Lord in salvation and new life” (Dwyer).

Whether we agree with the specifics of Dwyer’s comments or not, the practice of footwashing does help to form a complete picture of Christ’s redemptive work.

13:16 "Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him.

13:17 "If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

Jesus draws an analogy from lesser to greater and introduces the concept of the Master and servant. If He is Lord and He washed the disciples' feet, they should have no problems in washing one another's feet either. This could have one of two meanings. If this is a second application to the footwashing, then His comment simply means that the disciples should not think so highly of themselves that they refuse to serve others. If the Master serves in humility, so should His disciples, for they are not greater than He. If Jesus is telling them to wash each other's feet as a remembrance of cleansing, then this tells us why the disciples should not object.

Verse 17 can be interpreted in either way as well: (1) they will be blessed if they follow Jesus' example of servanthood, or (2) they will be blessed if they grasp the meaning behind Jesus' footwashing and practice it as an act of remembrance.

13:18 "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.'

Once again the betrayal of Judas comes in. It must have been heavy in John's heart for he mentions it a number of times (12:6; 13:2). This verse is important because it shows that Christ's choosing of us is what is decisive in salvation, not us following Him. Judas followed and was called Jesus' disciple, but he was not chosen.

The quote is from Psalm 41:9. Eating bread together indicated fellowship. Lifting up the heel is probably a reference to an animal (like a horse) preparing to kick. The use of both expressions together speak of an unnatural relationship. Judas' betrayal was not betrayal by an acquaintance, but was betrayal by a friend (Morris, 622).

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.

Jesus was telling the disciples these things so that they wouldn't be surprised when they happened, but more importantly, He informed them of what would take place to strengthen their faith. Jesus' knowledge of the future would cause them to see who Jesus really was ("I am" is an expression that has overtones of deity – see Jn. 8:58).

13:20 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me."

The dignity of Christ's messengers comes out in verse 20. The one who receives Jesus' messenger, receives Jesus. Whoever receives Jesus receives the Father who sent Him. Throughout the gospel of John, Jesus continually aligns Himself and His actions with the Father.

13:21 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."

13:22 The disciples began looking at one another, at a loss to know of which one He was speaking.

13:23 There was reclining on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved.

13:24 So Simon Peter gestured to him, and said to him, "Tell us who it is of whom He is speaking."

13:25 He, leaning back thus on Jesus' bosom, said to Him, "Lord, who is it?"

13:26 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.

13:27 After the morsel, Satan then entered into him. Therefore Jesus said to him, "What you do, do quickly."

13:28 Now no one of those reclining at the table knew for what purpose He had said this to him.

13:29 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.

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

Jesus had already mentioned that something was wrong within the group of disciples (Jn. 13:10, 18). He now clearly states that someone would betray Him. Jesus' words caused uneasiness among the disciples as they sought to know who He was referring to (v. 22).

Though Jesus was in complete control, He was human, and was thus affected emotionally as the events leading to His own death began to take place (see 11:33; 12:37).

The custom of the day was to recline on couches while eating with one's head facing the table and feet stretched out away from it. Those eating leaned on their left elbow and took food with their right hand. Three people reclined on each couch. In this case, Christ, the host, was at the head of the table with a disciple on either side of Him.

The disciple whom Jesus loved was no doubt a reference to John (Jn. 19:26-27; 20:2, 9; 21:1, 20-25). Once Jesus had said someone would betray Him, Simon Peter gestured to John to ask who the betrayer

might be. John (who was probably to the right of Jesus with his back to the Master) leaned his head back so that it was literally resting on Jesus chest and discretely asked Him. Jesus said He would point him out by his actions. He would dip some food (usually either meat or bread) into the common dish and hand it to the betrayer. Normally, receiving the food from the host would have been a compliment, a mark of honor and friendship. If this was the early part of the Passover meal, the morsel (bitter herbs?) may have been dipped into the fruit puree consisting of dates, raisins, and sour wine.

It is implied that Jesus spoke so that not all could hear, for it is difficult to believe that Judas heard Jesus and acted as predicted anyway.

The progress of evil within Judas is traceable in the gospel. In 6:70-71 Jesus spoke of him as a devil (or, adversary). In 12:4-6 he is called a thief. In 13:2 the devil is said to put ideas in his heart. And now in 13:27 Satan enters him. "His life was the antithesis of love, and its utter selfishness ended in satanic control and in the sin which has made his name a byword to all subsequent generations" (Tenney, 202).

At that moment Satan entered Judas and inspired his actions. Jesus then said to him, "What you do, do quickly," but no one understood what He was talking about. When Judas left they assumed he was sent on an errand; they speculated that perhaps he left to get more supplies for the feast (which would be odd if the Passover feast were the next day; surely there would be no rush to get supplies at night when they wouldn't need them for another twenty- four hours – see Carson, 475), or maybe it was to give to the poor. Some are critical of how slow the disciples were to understand. It seems John would have known what was happening, but to be fair, they had no conception that Jesus would die. Perhaps they assumed that the one who could calm storms, raise the dead, heal the sick, turn water into wine, and create bread and fish out of nothing could rectify whatever problem came up.

Judas left immediately, and John points out that it was night – a comment that is more than a time reference. As one commentator said, as the Passover moon shone brightly, Judas walked into darkness.