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THE GOSPEL OF JESUS

TORN DOWN AND BUILT UP

LUKE 22:24-38

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. The scene – Jesus with His disciples around the dinner table sharing Passover together
 - 1. Jesus had sent Peter and John into the city to find a man carrying a pitcher of water – Jesus told them to follow him until he enters a house and then go to the master of the house and say “The Teacher says to you, “Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?” ’ Then he will show you a large, furnished upper room; there make ready
 - a) Similar to the events of Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem – go into the village, there you will find a colt tied there
 - b) A reminder that God is orchestrating these events
 - 2. As they recline to eat, Jesus tells His disciples that it is with fervent desire that He has desired to eat this Passover with them before he suffers; it will be the last meal he enjoys with them until the kingdom of God is established
 - a) Then He makes a somewhat odd connection between His body and the bread and His blood and the wine. The bread is my body – given to you, the wine is my blood, which is shed for you
- B. The disciples don’t know what that parable means but that wasn’t uncommon. Jesus was known for saying these kinds of things
 - 1. What they did know was there was an air of anticipation surrounding this evening – something big was going to happen
 - 2. In their minds, Jesus was going to enter into Jerusalem, defeat the armies of Rome, and reclaim Jerusalem for the Jews
 - a) And they would be rulers of this new kingdom
 - 3. Then Jesus says something that sours the mood – “the hand of my betrayer is with me on the table” – probably changed the tone of the evening – the disciples began to argue about who it was
 - 4. It was in the midst of their arguing that Jesus rose from the table, laid aside His garments, took a towel and wrapped it around Himself, poured water into a basin, got on His hands and knees and began washing disciples’ feet and drying them with the towel wrapped around His waste
 - a) “If I, as your Teacher and Lord, have done this for you, you should go and do likewise. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.”

- C. This is the commission that Jesus imparts to His disciples before the cross
1. It is the message He imparts to His church – Jesus expounds on this message in ***John 13:34 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.***” He repeats it again ***John 15:12 This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.***
 2. Why does Jesus call it a new commandment? In the Old Testament the Israelites were commanded to love their neighbor as themselves but Jesus speaks of a superior love. Love each other as I have loved you.
 - a) And they are about to see the depths of that love
 3. Jesus says to the disciples – This is your hallmark, this is how people will know that you are my followers – not by your clever branding or slick website, not by your hip, socially aware mission statement, not by your multi-million sound system and light show, but by loving each other the way I love you
 4. The church is at its best and most effective when we are collectively working towards this end
 - a) If Jesus was so clear about the methods for our mission, what does it seem like the church is so far off track?

Luke 22:24 Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest.

II. THE UNSEEN WAR

- A. When the disciples sat down for dinner, all they saw was the Passover meal – they were completely unaware of the spiritual war that was taking place all around them
1. Satan was working tirelessly behind the scenes to destroy the person and work of Jesus
 2. Satan hates Jesus and he hates the church. He failed to prevent Jesus from accomplishing His work, not he has turned to his attention to the church to prevent us from accomplishing ours.
 - a) And since Christ-like, self-sacrificial love carries the mission of the church forward – where do you think he focuses his attack?
 3. Jesus is preparing the disciples for battle. To see past the physical into the spiritual. To know this superior kind of love isn’t easy and won’t come without a fight.
- B. We see how difficult this superior form of love can be
1. The creator of the universe was just on His hands and knees washing their feet and immediately afterwards they are arguing about which one of them is the greatest
 2. That is our human bent – that is the human heart in its natural state
 - a) Desiring to be served rather than to serve. Placing our needs above the needs of others
 - b) And we have gotten really good at excusing away our lack love – seeing a need and looking past it because it is just isn’t convenient or it is beneath us, or that person doesn’t deserve it

25 And He said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called ‘benefactors.’ (energizers – movers and shakers, they have all the power and influence) 26 But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. 27 For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves. 28 “But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials. 29 And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, 30 that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

- C. This is what greatness looks like in the kingdom of God. We have used the phrase “upside-down kingdom”
 - 1. Unlike this kingdom, God’s kingdom is where the first are last and the last are first – where those who lead are those who serve
 - 2. Jesus is going to turn over His mission to these 11 guys and one of them has been possessed by satan and is about to betray Him and the others are being influenced by satan and are arguing about who is the greatest – this looks nothing like His kingdom
 - 3. But Jesus even offers them this encouragement – “I am giving you a kingdom, and it’s mine to give because My Father gave it to Me. And you will eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel

Luke 22:31 And the Lord said, “Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. 32 But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.”

III. THE UNSEEN WAR

- A. Pride causes us to look right past the example that Jesus gave us, past the unseen spiritual war around us, and rest our vision squarely on ourselves
 - 1. How many of the disciples were concerned with the fact that Jesus was going to be betrayed? They were more concerned with convincing the others that they weren’t the betrayer than they were about the reality that their Teacher and Lord was about to be betrayed
 - 2. Let us be warned here – we are easily distracted by pride. And that distraction is far more sinister than we think.
 - 3. Simon, Simon – Jesus uses Peter’s old name because he was falling back into old patterns – satan has asked for you that he may sift you as wheat.
 - a) One thing we miss in the English translation is that “you” is plural – satan has asked for all of you
 - b) **Matt 26:31 Then Jesus said to them, “All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: ‘I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’**

- B. Who did Satan ask? – if the book of Job is any indication – Satan asked God for the disciples
1. Satan has a great deal of power – Jesus calls him the ruler of this world, Paul calls him the god of this age, the ruler of the authority of the air – he has a great deal of influence in this world – that should be a sobering reality
 2. But it must always be tempered with the understanding that Satan's power is by permission – we don't know exactly what he asked but we can certainly assume that he asked to do them harm with the intent of crushing their faith
 - a) We know this by Jesus' encouragement – "I have prayed for you that your faith would not fail"
 - b) Wasn't that the case with Job? "Let me take away the blessings and Job will curse you." Even Job's wife told him to curse God and die!
 3. So why would God ever give Satan permission to bring about suffering and pain in the life of a believer?
 - a) "When you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren"
- C. The very things that Satan uses to crush our faith, God uses to strengthen it
1. Isn't that what Joseph tells his brothers in Egypt – what you meant for evil, God meant it for good
 2. Paul echoes this in Romans 8 when he writes "all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose."
 - a) And we get to see exactly how Peter was strengthened

33 But he said to Him, "Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death." 34 Then He said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me."

IV. THE REFINING FIRE

- A. Peter had to be humbled. He had to be made fully depend on Jesus. Not just Peter, all of the disciples
1. **Matt 26:34 Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." 35 Peter said to Him, "Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!" And so said all the disciples.**
 2. The Apostle John gives us even more insight in **John 13:37 Peter said to Him, "Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake." 38 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.**
 - a) Will you die for me? Is that God's cosmic plan? Peter – get behind me Satan Peter, Peter - having nothing to say said Peter, That Peter is going to die for Jesus? Sounds ridiculous but we think that way sometimes.
 - b) We can have so much passion and excitement and determination – God, I am going to do great things for you! What we must learn it is God who does great things through us

- B. Here is the practicality of the Gospel throughout scripture – This is what you must do, this is why you can't do it, Jesus did it, and now you can do it through Him
1. This superior form of love is only possible through Jesus – this kind of love that seeks out those on the fringes of our society to serve them, this kind of love that treats enemies as friends, this kind of love that rises above a worldly system that exploits differences in an attempt to turn us against each other – it is impossible without Jesus
 2. “When you have returned to Me” – there will be a moment soon where Peter will fail Jesus and everything he thought he was will come crashing down – and he will weep bitterly
 3. But not long after that we will see Peter's restoration by the Sea of Galilee in John 21 – when the resurrected Christ will approach Peter's fishing boat and Peter won't even wait until it hits land to rush to Jesus and embrace Him
 - a) Pain and suffering has a way of opening our eyes – bringing perspective – giving us a clearer understanding of Jesus and a clearer understanding of ourselves
 - b) Later in life Peter would write these words **1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. 9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. 10 But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.**
 4. Our hearts are so deceitful, we can convince ourselves that even our pride is righteous
 5. But here is the encouragement for those who love God and called according to His purposes - Jesus is praying for us, He is praying for our faith – so when we finally come to the end of our own resources we will return to Him and then, we are ready to go out and strengthen our brothers and sisters
 - a) Only those who have been strengthened can strengthen others

Luke 22:35 And He said to them, “When I sent you without money bag, knapsack, and sandals, did you lack anything?” So they said, “Nothing.” 36 Then He said to them, “But now, he who has a money bag, let him take it, and likewise a knapsack; and he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one. 37 For I say to you that this which is written must still be accomplished in Me: ‘And He was numbered with the transgressors.’ For the things concerning Me have an end.” 38 So they said, “Lord, look, here are two swords.” And He said to them, “It is enough.”

V. BE PREPARED

- A. Up until this point, Jesus and the disciples had been generally well received
1. When you are part of a guy's inner circle that heals the sick, feeds the hungry, and raises the dead people tend not to mind having you around
 2. Remember, up until this point the crowds have been very accepting of Jesus – so much so that the religious leaders were afraid to arrest Him publicly
 3. The disciples had yet to truly suffer for the cause of Christ

4. But all of that is about to change, and Jesus wants His disciples to be prepared for this dramatic shift in public opinion
 - a) In their eyes – Jesus has been a popular figure, they have shared in His popularity, and now Jesus was going to take His place on His throne, and they would be at his side
 - b) But that is not how this story goes – in fact Jesus spent a day earlier in the week explaining everything that had to take place before He would return to establish His everlasting kingdom
- B. “When I sent you without money bag, knapsack, and sandals, did you lack anything?”
So they said, “Nothing.”
1. Luke 9 – Don’t take anything with you, you will be well received. All your needs will be met. If you meet someone who is not hospitable move on to the next house.
 - a) When I sent you out, did you ever miss a meal? Did you ever lack a roof over your head? Never.
 2. That is the type of reception they were used to. But after this evening they are going to be living in a very different world.
 - a) It is culture shock for them – at the first hint of persecution they scatter. Peter denies Christ. This type of widespread hostility is foreign to them.
 3. Jesus wants to prepare them for what is to come. “But now” – those two words signify a change.
- C. This once welcoming world is going to turn against Jesus and turn against His followers
1. That is Jesus’ point – “But now, he who has a money bag, let him take it, and likewise a knapsack; and he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.”
 2. Jesus wasn’t telling the disciples that they are going to spread the Gospel by force – but that they were about to enter a hostile world
 3. We will see later on in Luke that Peter didn’t fully understand this message. He thought when the Roman soldiers showed up it was time to usher in the kingdom of God by force.
 4. This will take us into next week’s study – the disciples are troubled by this message - John 14:1 “Let not your heart be troubled;
 - a) Pride distracts, fear paralyzes – overconfidence and a lack of confidence keep us from loving others well
 - b) Jesus has addressed their pride, now He comfort them in their fear