John 13 â?? Part 20a

Description

Following on from the previous chapter where we introduced the concept of â??God in the midstâ?•, the idea that we have to seek and find the spiritual man â??God the Fatherâ??. We need to start to understand God on a Spiritual level and not just on an intellectual level or on a level that is only looking for a personal blessing.

Our starting point to knowing God has to be from a place of spirituality, because â??God the Father is spirit and those who worship Him must worship in Spirit and Truthâ?• John 4:24. It is true to say that in reality â??Everything is Spiritualâ?•, it is only when we recognise Spirit that we can begin our lifeâ??s journey towards and with Jesus. As John wrote at the outset of this gospel in John 1:12-13 â??*But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are rebornâ??not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God*â?•.

To be a Christian is not just about what we do or what doctrinal position we take or have about the theory of â??God in our midstâ?•, it is about experiencing â??God in our midstâ?• and naturally working out the great work of salvation that God has so graciously worked in us. It is a work accomplished through His Son who willingly trod a path to a cruel cross in order that you and I could have, and experience, eternal life.

Here in John 13 we have an account of both commitment to and betrayal of Jesus, an account that demonstrates to us today the seriousness of what the cost of discipleship really means.

Our story starts around a meal table, a place where conversation takes place. Jesus is celebrating with his disciples a meal we have come to know as the last supper. It is in this place of closeness with his disciples, with those he had chosen to be his disciples with him in his three years of extraordinary ministry, that we encounter the man Jesus demonstrating what true Christianity is all about.

Commitment

The narrative tells us in John 13:3 that Jesus knew â??t*hat the Father had given him all authority*â?• and â??*that his time had come to return to His Father*.â?• With this knowledge of knowing what was ahead Jesus rises from his place at the table, takes a towel and a bowl of water and proceeds to wash his disciples feet. This act is demonstrating that Christianity is about service not ritual. He is also showing that for anyone of us to be able to partake of the â??Kingdom of Heavenâ?• we need the experience of washing by the hands and life of Jesus so we can be presented to the Father, spotless, by and in the person of Jesus Christ.

We read in John 13:8 that Peter protests at this demonstration of servant hood that Jesus is modelling and the narrative gives the impression that Peter was too proud and too full of self importance to allow this man, who he had come to know and revere as a friend and as Lord, to stoop so low as to wash his feet, a job that would have been the task of an employed servant in an established Jewish/Roman

household of the time. Jesusâ?? response to Peterâ??s attitude was â??you donâ??t understand now, but someday you willâ?• and â??if you donâ??t allow me to perform this act of service on you then you have no part with me.â?• At this point in the proceedings Peter has a light bulb moment where he demonstrates and reveals his ignorance to the whole situation and says â??well not just my feet then, wash all of me.â?• The truth is that we are all clean through the word already spoken (as we will discover in John 15:3 later) but we need to be in a place of submission where we allow our feet, the area that is symbolically in contact with the world, to be washed in order for us to continue to live in this great freedom we call salvation.

It is true to say that everyone of us has the potential to betray, and as we know even Peter, who has just made a scene over the demonstration of servant hood, would betray Jesus in the not too distant future.

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Category

1. Journey through John

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