

RELATED SCRIPTURES

Zechariah 11:12-13 | Matthew 26:17-25 | Romans 5:8

STUDY FOR SERMON FROM 1.14.24

SUMMARY

After Jesus had just completed the selfless act of washing his disciples' feet, he and his disciples assembled for what most of them believed to be another typical Passover meal. However, the evening quickly turned to anything but typical. The first thing we can observe from this account is that "Jesus was troubled in his spirit." It might be easy to assume since Jesus was God incarnate, he knew the beginning from the end; why would he ever be troubled? Yet so, Jesus was fully God and fully man; he experienced the full range of human experience, including the profound disappointment of betrayal. As he continues, Jesus reveals what is troubling him and states, "one of you will betray me." Earlier in the chapter, the gospel writer reveals to us who it is to which Jesus refers, but in the moment, the disciples are "uncertain of whom he spoke." In Matthew's gospel, he tells us the disciples even individually questioned, "Is it I?" revealing the doubts and uncertainty about where following Jesus would lead. As the meal continues, Simon Peter prompts another disciple (believed to be John) to ask Jesus discreetly to whom he refers. Jesus obliges the question by revealing the betrayer as the one "to whom I will give this morsel of bread when I have dipped it." Out of context, this action seems to be an odd way to communicate, but in context, the act of receiving a morsel of dipped bread into one's mouth was reserved for the honored guest of the feast. If nothing else, Jesus' actions reveal the depth of his love for his doubting disciples (who would soon leave his side) and for his betrayers and detractors; he loved them—to the very end—despite their doubts and disloyalty. Perhaps the apostle Paul said it best, ". . . while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

GROUP QUESTIONS

Share something that surprises, encourages, or troubles you from the sermon or your direct reading of John 13:21-38.

Do you ever have doubts about your right standing with God or your faith in Jesus? What causes those doubts? What is a remedy to those doubts?

Think of a time when you faced betrayal. How does Jesus' posture toward Judas (and, for that matter, the rest of the disciples) change how you think about the person who betrayed you? Does it change? Why or why not?

If there's one thing Jesus would want you to walk away believing and receiving as a result of this portion of Scripture, what is that thing?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

As you pray, be sure to include today's themes in what you bring before God.