

Gospel John Chapter 13 -- John Karmelich

1. Last week I mentioned the question, “If you were arrested for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to arrest you?”
 - a) Today we are going to look at Jesus’ definition of “evidence”.
 - b) What evidence does God want in our lives to prove that we are Christians?
 - c) Jesus is going to talk about evidence in both words and deeds.
 - i) Just as He expects us to be his disciples in words and deeds.
2. Our story moves from “anointed feet” to “stinky feet”.
 - a) In Chapter 12 we read of a woman who anointed Jesus’ feet.
 - b) Tonight we have Jesus washing the disciples feet!
 - i) The lessons are not about having clean feet,
 - a) as much as Jesus setting an example for Christian service.
 - c) In Chapter 12, Mary warned Jesus that Lazarus has been dead for 4 days, and now “stinks”. In Chapter 13, we learn how born-again Christians keep ourselves “clean”.
3. Chapter 13 begins a transition in the Gospel of John.
 - a) The first 12 chapters focus on who is Jesus.
 - i) His identity, his role, his purpose in coming.
 - a) Some of this is continued in the remaining chapters.
 - ii) But the focus of the next four chapters is on us!
 - iii) It’s kind of like saying...
 - a) OK, I now understand that Jesus is the Son of God.
 - b) I now understand he paid the ransom for my sins.
 - c) I’m starting to understand that God came to earth in the form of man.
 - (1) (That’s what Jesus’ title “Son of Man” refers to.)
 - d) So now what?
 - (1) That’s what the next 4 chapters is all about!
4. With that, let’s go to Chapter 13, Verse 1:
5. It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.
 - a) A lot of commentators are divided over whether or not this meal was the *actual* Passover meal, or a meal the night before the Passover.
 - i) If it was not actually Passover, this meal would be like people getting together the day before Thanksgiving and referring to it as their “thanksgiving dinner”.
 - ii) It is one of those “scholarly” debates that, in my opinion is not very important.
 - b) This verse raises a good question. Does God love “his own” greater than those who are not “his own”?
 - i) This verse states that Jesus “Having loved his own who were in the world...”
 - ii) But in John 3:16 it says “For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son...” (NIV)
 - a) How do you reconcile that?
 - iii) The best explanation I read is that “God’s love for the world is *not* displaced by his concentrated love for his disciples (and us)” (F.F. Bruce)
 - a) “It is those who choose to *receive* God’s love who experience it to the fullness.”

6. Verse 2: The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. ³ Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God;
 - a) The allusion to the devil shows that John understood there is more to the conflict than meets the eye.
 - b) This verse reminds us that demonic forces are always around us.
 - i) There is a *lot* more to the world than one can see.
 - ii) Therefore, it is *always* important to pray *daily* for God's protection.
 - a) Put on the "spiritual battle gear" *before* one goes into battle!
 - iii) A good study is to learn and pray is the "Armor of God" prayer.
 - a) Which is Ephesians Chapter 6, Verses 13-18.
 - iv) As Paul says: For our struggle is *not* against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. (Eph 6:12 NIV)
 - v) Peter later understood this too.
 - a) Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. (1 Peter 5:8 NIV)
 - c) I am fascinated that Jesus was *aware* of the devil's presence, but did not cast him out!
 - i) As you read this chapter, and other descriptions of Judas, you will see that Jesus is *always* giving Judas the choice to repent.
 - ii) The fact that Jesus did not cast Satan out of his presence was because He was giving Judas the choice of whom to serve. We will develop this more as we go.
7. Verse 3 again: Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; ⁴ so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. ⁵ After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.
 - a) Jerusalem is a desert climate. A lot of dust exists. Jewish people bathed daily. But walking around all day in robes and open-toe sandals brings dust on the feet.
 - i) It is normally the job of the lowest servant to wash the feet of the master when they come home.
 - b) In Luke, we learn that the disciples were disputing among themselves.
 - i) "Also a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest." (Luke 22:24 NIV)
 - ii) This means that nobody washed each other's feet, because they were busy arguing who was greatest!
 - iii) None of them would mind washing Jesus feet. That would give them a chance to show Jesus "who was the greatest among them"!
 - iv) But to wash each other's feet would imply admission of inferiority over the other disciples.
 - v) There is a mistake we make.
 - a) To do something Jesus asks us to do? No problem, glad to serve!
(1) We want to show Jesus just how good we are.
 - b) But to do some menial task for other Christians? This is where our ego, like the disciples, takes over.
8. Verse 6: He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"
 - a) You have to love Peter: brash, outspoken, and talks without thinking it through.
 - b) There is an old Christian joke that says "The only time Peter ever opened his mouth was to change feet!"
 - i) It is also amazing to study the differences in Peter's speech's and sermons before *and after* Pentecost, when he received the Holy Spirit.

9. Verse 7: Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." :8 "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."
 - a) Peter understood authority.
 - i) Peter thought Jesus meant that Jesus would be lower in authority than Peter.
 - ii) Remember that it is the lowest servant who washes feet.
 - b) When Jesus says in Verse 8 "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.", he is not talking about being born-again.
 - i) That was taken care of once and for all on the cross.
 - ii) Jesus is talking here about "fellowship", which means spending time together.
 - a) "Jesus is not talking about beginning the Christian life, but of enjoying it, of progressing in it." Ray Steadman
 - c) Jesus told Peter in Verse 7 "later you will understand. Jesus was right.
 - i) Listen to what Peter said years later in 1st Peter, Chapter 5, Verse 5:
 - ii) "Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." (1 Pet 5:5 NIV)
10. Verse 9: "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"
 - a) I love Peter because I relate so much to him.
 - i) He goes from one extreme (never wash me) to the other extreme ("but my hands and head as well").
 - ii) We all have those tendencies for lack of balance in our lives.
11. Verse 10: Jesus answered, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you."
 - a) One of the most confusing things for Christians to understand is:
 - i) If Jesus died for *all* my sins, past present *and* future, what is He talking about when he says I have to *continually* wash my feet?
 - a) This is obviously a spiritual application, and not a direct reference to foot-washing!
 - b) In my introduction, I talked about Chapter 13 is a discussion of how to *practically* live our Christian lives.
 - i) This is often referred to as "our daily walk" with Jesus.
 - a) This is where *daily* time with Jesus comes in.
 - (1) "to make her (the church) holy, cleansing her by the *washing with water* through the *word*," (Ephesians 5:26 NIV, *emphasis added*).
 - b) A second part of a consistently cleansing ourselves is a regular confession of our sins. Remember "The Christians bar of soap" verse:
 - (1) If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
 - (a) (1 John 1:9 NKJV)
 - (2) "If you want the sense of Jesus going with you through all of life, learn every day to acknowledge your sinfulness and let him cleanse your feet again." Ray Steadman
 - (3) If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear. (Psalm 66:18 NIV)
12. Verse 11: For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.
 - a) When we are born-again, we are "clean". Judas was never born-again.

13. Verse 12: When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. ¹³ "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. ¹⁴ Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. ¹⁶ I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.
- a) As we finish the "feet washing" section, here is *why* some churches do & some don't.
 - i) Those who do, use verse 15 as their basis.
 - a) For churches that do, I believe it is important to emphasize what washing of the feet *means* as opposed to the actual act.
 - (1) 1 Timothy 5:10 also has a reference to washing of feet.
 - b) For churches that don't practice the ceremony, they base their actions on the fact that it is not mentioned anywhere in the New Testament as a ceremony to be performed as a church service.
 - c) With that said, it is not significant enough to divide the church.
 - b) Jesus is essentially saying in here: "you call me Teacher and Lord, then act like it!"
 - i) If I am your "teacher", do what I teach.
 - ii) If I am you "Lord", do what I command you!
 - iii) "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say? (Luke 6:46 NIV)
 - c) Remember that the disciples were arguing over who would be the greatest.
 - i) This paragraph is Jesus response to that argument.
 - ii) Essentially, "You want to be great in heaven, learn to be the servant of all".
 - a) This is a combination of actual service as well as attitude.
 - b) Putting the needs of others above yourself.
 - iii) Jesus makes a very similar argument in Luke 22, Verses 24 to 27
 - a) "For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves." (Luke 22:27 NIV)
 - d) I want to digress for a moment. The "servant's attitude is easy to say, but difficult to practice. We all want our way. The reason we argue with our spouses, our parents, our room-mates, etc. is we want *our* needs met *prior* to their needs.
 - i) So how does one *practically* do this, especially on a regular basis?
 - ii) Romans 12:2 has the answer: "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed (how?) *by the renewing of your mind*. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will. "(NIV, *emphasis added*)
 - iii) The process of letting go of our needs to put others first is a constant, continuing process of *giving God* our frustrations, and then learning to love that person *how God wants us to love them*.
 - iv) Sample prayer: "Lord, right now, I am really angry at ... They treated me wrong, they sinned, and its not fair. Now I take *all* this hurt, this anger, this frustration, and turn it over to you. Now fill me with your love, to love that person as you want me to love them. (Consider adding a favorite scripture verse at this point to help fill the "void" of that anger.)
 - v) This is truly a "supernatural" experience. It is difficult to practice, because our old selfish nature wants to be in charge.
 - vi) Like any other Christian discipline (prayer, daily Bible reading, etc.) this takes time, and it gets easier as one practices it!
 - a) For more information, there are many good books on this Topic. (e.g. "Why Should I Be The First To Change?" by Nancy Missler)

- e) There is a balance to this too. Many Christians get victimized by people who take advantage of our servant's attitude.
 - i) A good motto is: "Do as God leads, not as someone demands."
 - ii) If this is an issue, there is a wonderful Christian book called "Boundaries".
 - a) (Complete title: Boundaries : When to Say Yes When to Say No to Take Control of Your Life -- Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend)
 - f) Last point to make about this paragraph. Verse 17: "Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them."
 - i) In my Bible, I underline the word "do".
 - ii) God promises us that we are blessed if we "do" the things that Jesus commands us to do.
 - a) This is what James meant when he said the evidence of our faith without works is dead. (James 2:20)
14. Back to John. Verse 18: "I am not referring to all of you; I know those I have chosen. But this is to fulfill the scripture: 'He who shares my bread has lifted up his heel against me.'"
- a) Jesus has stated at least 1-2 years earlier that one would betray him.
 - i) "Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil!" (John 6:70 NIV)
 - b) Jesus is quoting in this verse from Psalm 41:9.
 - i) David, who wrote the psalm, had a close friend & advisor named Ahithophel.
 - ii) David's son Absalom rebelled against King David (2 Samuel 15:12; 16:15-23)
 - a) This psalm is David's lamentation the defection of a trusted friend.
 - iii) This is an example of prophecy by parallelism.
 - a) Jesus' lamenting one of his trusted friends abandoning Him,
 - b) as David lamented his trusted friend abandoning him.
 - c) I brought up the question last week, why was Jesus betrayed by one of the "12"?
 - i) I think it is to remind us to put our faith in God and not the messenger!
 - ii) In Matthew 10:1 "He (Jesus) called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness. (NIV)
 - iii) Judas was among these 12!
 - iv) So if a person "got saved" by a Judas, and that person went bad, would the person who got saved then lose their salvation? Of course not!
 - v) "No one is saved by the faith of the messenger or preacher". J Vernon McGee
15. Verse 19: "I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that I am He."
- a) Jesus was prepping his disciples for what was to come.
 - i) Jesus is saying don't worry about what is about to happen. It is all for God's purpose. You will one day understand why all of it was necessary.
 - ii) He knew they were going to feel defeated when they saw Jesus on the cross.
 - iii) Jesus, although was grieved by the anticipation of the cross, still knew God was going to resurrect Him.
 - iv) The application to us is *not* to focus on the present grief, but to focus on the fact that God has a wonderful plan for our lives. He wants us to see beyond our present predicament.
16. Verse 20: I tell you the truth, whoever accepts anyone I send accepts me; and whoever accepts me accepts the one who sent me."
- a) I can't top the commentary Jesus said in Matthew that goes with these verses:
 - b) "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' "The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.' (Matthew 25:37 -40 NIV)

17. Verse 21: After he had said this, Jesus was troubled in spirit and testified, "I tell you the truth, one of you is going to betray me."
 - a) Why was Jesus not angry with Judas for betraying Him?
 - i) His love for us all. Jesus did and does not want to lose anybody.
 - ii) Jesus is also not going to force anybody to do anything against their will.
18. Verse 22: His disciples stared at one another, at a loss to know which of them he meant. ²³ One of them, the disciple whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to him. ²⁴ Simon Peter motioned to this disciple and said, "Ask him which one he means." ²⁵ Leaning back against Jesus, he asked him, "Lord, who is it?"
 - a) There is a sign of spiritual growth here among the disciples.
 - i) In Matthew 26:22 (same story) the disciples asked the question "Lord is it I?"
 - ii) They didn't look at Jesus, point the finger at each other and say "is it Him?",
 - iii) but Lord is it I?
 - iv) I suspect Judas probably said "Is it I" too, as to not let the others on to his plan.
 - b) I happen to love the express in Verse 23: "The one who Jesus loved"
 - i) John was describing himself in the 3rd person.
 - ii) I suspect that all the disciples felt that Jesus loved Him more than the others.
 - a) We are all the ones "Who Jesus loved"
 - b) Jesus had that way about him.
 - c) I feel like Jesus loves me more than others sometimes, but that is just the way Jesus is!
 - d) "The more I know about me, the more amazed I am that Jesus loves me (Jon Curson).
 - c) In Verse 24: "Peter motioned to this disciple (i.e. John) "Ask him which one he means
 - i) In a Passover meal, the disciples all laid on couches. They ate with their right hand and leaned on their left side. They all leaned on each other for support.
 - (1) There were no chairs like the painting "The Last Supper".
 - b) John was seated at Jesus' right.
 - (1) Therefore John was leaning on Jesus' chest. (Verse 23)
 - ii) Peter was probably on the other side of the table.
 - a) Peter motioned to John to ask Jesus, probably out of everyone's earshot.
 - iii) Judas was sitting at Jesus left. Judas' seating location is reserved for the highest esteemed person at the table.
 - a) I think Jesus wanted to give Judas every chance to repent.
 - b) Even when Jesus was betrayed, he called Judas "'friend".
 - (1) Jesus replied, "Friend, do what you came for." Then the men stepped forward, seized Jesus and arrested him. (Mat 26:50 NIV)
 - c) "God never sends a man to hell unless that man first of all sends himself there. You see, God ratifies human decision; God seconds the motion." J Vernon McGee
19. Verse 26: Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish." Then, dipping the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, son of Simon.
 - a) In Jewish custom for Passover, Judas was sitting in the place of honor. Giving Judas the bread was a last chance for fellowship with Jesus. The offering to share the bread is a token of honor. Jesus offered his love to Judas to the very end.
20. Verse 27 As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. "What you are about to do, do quickly," Jesus told him, ²⁸ but no one at the meal understood why Jesus said this to him. ²⁹
 - a) "Satan could not have entered into him had he not granted him admission." (Bruce)
 - i) People who consistently turn their back on God are open to Satan's forces.

21. Since Judas had charge of the money, some thought Jesus was telling him to buy what was needed for the Feast, or to give something to the poor. ³⁰ As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night.
 - a) The disciples were clueless as to Judas' deception.
 - i) Deceivers can also be great actors. It reminds us that we are to judge actions, but only God knows what is in a person's heart.
 - b) The key expression in Verse 30 is "And it was night"
 - i) I believe the writer John loves these little "double-meaning" expressions.
 - a) It refers to the literal darkness when Judas left the house
 - b) And the spiritual darkness as Judas finally rejected Jesus.
 - c) "When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness." (Luke 22:53 NKJV)
22. From Verse 31 to the end of Chapter 16 begins a series of discussions commonly referred to among commentators as "The Upper Room Discourses".
 - a) From Verse 31 to the end of Chapter 14 is a dialogue about Christ's departure.
 - b) Chapter 15 & Chapter 16 is about the loving relationship between Christ & his people.
23. Verse 31: When he was gone, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in him. ³² If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once.
 - a) The word "glorified" is used five times in these two verses.
 - b) Notice that Jesus does not talk about his glorification until *after* Judas departure.
 - i) Most commentators suggest that "The Upper Room Discourses" were specifically meant for believers only.
 - c) Notice Jesus never talks about himself in the first person. He gives the honor to God. Even the title "Son of Man", which is a reference to his humanity is designed to show God's purpose in sending Jesus.
 - d) "From the human side the Cross looks like shame and defeat, but God is glorified in Him because the salvation of the world will be wrought through the Cross".
J. Vernon McGee
24. Verse 33: "My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: Where I am going, you cannot come.
 - a) The phrase "My children", or "dear children" (KJV) or "my little children" (TLB) is used four times in Gospel of John. This is the first.
 - i) Jesus used this as role of head of family.
 - ii) In the Passover meal, it is customary for the young children to ask questions about the Passover. They are usually written out. The father then responds to the "little children" in a loving way.
 - iii) This is an expression of Love, as a parent loves a child.
 - iv) Remember Jesus words about children: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and *become like little children*, you will *never* enter the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 18:3 NIV *emphasis added*)
25. Verse 34: "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.
 - a) It consistently humbles me to realize that the most important commandment for a Christian is not to witness, not to serve, but to *love* other believers, without end.
 - b) Leviticus 19:18 says to love your neighbor as yourself.
 - c) How is this a new commandment?
 - i) New commandment is "Love one another *as I have loved you*."
 - ii) Not love generally, but loving *sacrificially*.

26. Verse 35: By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."
- a) How do you be a good witness? Do you beat people over the head with a Bible? Do you stand on the street corner and yell repent? Re-read verse 35.
 - i) Preaching the gospel is essential. But people won't care about the Gospel until they see a *changed life*. This ties back to last week when it was mentioned that the way to increase church attendance was to fill it with "Lazarus(es)"
 - ii) "People don't care what you know until they know what you care!"
27. Verse 36: Simon Peter asked him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus replied, "Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later." :³⁷ Peter asked, "Lord, why can't I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you." :³⁸ Then Jesus answered, "Will you really lay down your life for me? I tell you the truth, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times!
- a) Jesus knew that Peter was willing to die for him. It was Peter's nature.
 - b) The danger of Peter was he was relying on his own strength, not God's.
 - c) It's like telling God, "Now Lord, I need your help in this and that area of my life, because you know that is my weakness. But this area where I am strong, I got it handled."
 - i) The greatest danger for Christians to fail is in the areas they consider to be their strength. This is *exactly* what happened to Peter.
 - ii) His one area of failure was also in his greatest strength: "boldness".
 - iii) "It's a great period of hope, because, as he did with Peter, our Lord is quite willing to teach them; it will be a process of pain and hurt, rejection and failure. I don't know any Christian who has ever been used of God who hasn't had to go through that same process." Ray Steadman
28. Let's Pray: Father, in our busy lives, we get so focused on our needs, desires and wants, that we fail to come to you, like little children. We make the mistake of trying to please you through our own emotion and strength, when you have so much more for us if we just learn to rely more on your power and not our own. Help us to remember the great commandment, to love one another as you have loved us. Fill us with this love, again not through our own self-discipline, but through the Holy Spirit working through us. We ask this in Jesus name, Amen.