

## A Few of My Favorite Things: How Loved are You?

John 13:1-11

Read John 13:1-11 together:

*Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand." Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me." Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" Jesus said to him, "The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you." For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, "Not all of you are clean."*

The first time recorded in the gospels where Jesus told His disciples, "I love you" is in John 13:34. Amazing! Jesus has been with these disciples for approximately three (3) years by this time. He has invested in teaching and leading them, yet this is the first time Jesus has been recorded in Scripture as saying to them, "I love you."

- ? Had you ever realized that Jesus is not recorded as telling His disciples He loved them before this?
- ? What significance can you see in the timing of this event? (Remember we are a few short hours before Jesus' arrest and crucifixion!)
- ? Do you ever wonder, "Does God love me? Really, really love me?"

John chapter 13 is a turning point in Jesus' earthly ministry. Up until this time, Jesus has focused primarily on His public ministry. He has healed lepers, cripples, blind, deaf, and mute. He has raised the dead. And now He seems to turn His focus on preparing His disciples for what is to come.

And, so He washes His disciples' feet! What? Gross!

- ? What do you think the disciples were thinking?
- ? What do you think of Peter's declaration that he would never allow Jesus to wash his feet?

? Why would Peter make such a statement?

As always, it helps to understand the context of this event. What Jesus set out to do, washing His disciples' feet, was scandalous! It is not simply that Jesus was their teacher, their leader. A job as menial and dishonorable was never to be done by any Israelite! Not even an Israelite slave would be told to wash anyone's feet. Only a gentile slave would be made to perform such a dishonorable task!

And, yet, Jesus got on His knees and washed the feet of His disciples. So, what does this have to do with love? Is this simply Jesus showing just how humble He is for His disciples? In this passage, John focuses not on Jesus' love, but, rather, Jesus' love!

We will use John 13:1b as our anchor as we consider just how much Jesus loved His disciples and how much He loves us, His children.

...having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.  
John 13:1b

### Loved From the Beginning

The Greek grammar of "having loved His own..." is very revealing. This verb form is called the Present Perfect Progressive tense in English. This tense describes something that began in the past, continues into the present, and will continue into the future. Simply put, John is stating here that Jesus loved His disciples all along from before time began.

? Have you ever thought about when Jesus started loving you?

? How does it change your thinking when you consider that Jesus, that God has loved you specifically since before creation?

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as He chose us in Him *before the foundation of the world*, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us for adoption to Himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will, to the praise of His glorious grace, with which He has blessed us in the Beloved.  
John 13:1b

"You're worse than you think you are; but you're not worse than he knows you are!" Read that carefully again! God knows us and our sins completely and perfectly. And yet, despite our sin offending him and betraying him every day (multiple times!), he still chose us and continues to pledge his steadfast love toward us based upon his unchanging nature!

### Loved Right Now

"...who were in the world..." Jesus loved His disciples while they walked this earth. We also are loved by Jesus and loved by God the Father, as we walk this earth. As His children, we are loved today.

? Does God really love us despite our sinful hearts and minds? How can we know that beyond all doubt?

? What does Romans 5:6,8 say in response to the above question?

Jesus loves the real you, not the pretend you that you want everyone to believe in! There is also an embedded warning in this passage! Notice what Jesus says when He replies to Peter, *"The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean."* Even though Peter is "completely clean," he must "wash his feet."

? What do you think Jesus means by this statement?

? If as a child of God, I am completely clean (made righteous by Jesus' blood), in what way do I need to continue to "wash my feet"?

As Paul urges the Roman believers in chapter 6 of his letter, we are not to let sin reign in our lives! We are to present ourselves to God as His instruments for righteousness. We stand before God in Jesus' righteousness, and yet we are to put away sin and put on righteousness.

### **Loved Forever**

"He loved them to the end." Just as Jesus loved His disciples to the end, so also, He loves us.

? What do think "to the end" means? Does this imply that Jesus' love has an ending?

? Can you think of a passage that provides an answer to the above question?

Read John chapter 17 together. This passage is called the High Priestly Prayer of Jesus. Focus your attention on verses 20 and 21.

? What do you see in verses 20 and 21?

? Consider the context as Jesus prays for believers such as us! What is to happen very shortly after this prayer?

Think of the love of Jesus. Facing an excruciating death on a cross, facing separation from His Father, He prays for us! Do you wonder if God really loves you? Just keep returning to the cross! Reread passages such as John 13, John 17, or Romans 8. Jesus has loved us since eternity past. He loves us today. He will love us forever!