

Dr. David Turner, Gospel of John, Session 15, John 13:1-30

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This is Dr. David Turner in his teaching on the Gospel of John. This is session 15, the Farewell Discourse, Introduction, Foot washing and Betrayal, John 13:1-30.

When we began our series of videos on the Gospel of John, we spent some time showing the literary structure of John and how it is analyzed by many scholars today as a book of signs up through chapter 12 and then turning to chapters 13 through 17 as a book where Jesus shows and teaches about the glory of God.

So, we have the Book of Signs, the public ministry of Jesus up through chapter 12, then the Book of Glory, verses chapters 13 to 17, preceding the passion in John, which would be chapters 18 through 20. So, we're right between the time of the Book of Signs and the Book of Glory. We've been looking at the Book of Signs and in our last video we noticed how there's that rather sad and plaintive word in chapter 12, verse 37, even though Jesus had done so many signs, yet they did not believe in him.

Thankfully, the few verses following that relativize that statement a bit from the universal way that it sounds and it does acknowledge that people were believing in Jesus. Nevertheless, the public ministry of Jesus has come to an end in the Gospel of John and things are not as we would as followers of Jesus hope they were. Many people had not believed in him and many of the religious leaders of the Pharisees and of the priestly aristocracy had redoubled their efforts to arrest and to execute Jesus.

So, all this is not coming to Jesus as something of which he is unaware. So, the rest of John is focusing on our Lord preparing his disciples from 13 through 17 for his departure, which probably should not be understood as his absence or his total farewell from them, but as a very somber and serious word about the way in which God's presence with the disciples will be transformed from the physical presence of Jesus to the presence of Jesus with the disciples through the ministry of the parakletos, the helper, the comforter, the advocate, the Holy Spirit. So we'll be looking at much teaching about the Spirit in videos to come from John 14 through 16, but this is our first video on chapter 13, so we're going to spend some time introducing the so-called upper room discourse, the farewell discourse, whatever you prefer to call it, and then we'll spend some time looking at how Jesus washed the disciples' feet.

So, we'll start off this video with a discussion of just what the farewell discourse is all about. So, notice our first slide on the matter. It's not unusual at all for people to call

this the upper room discourse, and in order to call it that, one must bring some information into John that is not in John.

The upper room, of course, is mentioned in Mark 14, in Mark's passion narrative, as well as in Luke's. As you may recall from the book of Acts, disciples are hanging out in that same upper room, evidently, in Acts chapter 1, verse 13, between the time of the ascension of Jesus and the day of Pentecost. John does say, of course, that this discourse is in Jerusalem.

That's where Jesus is found, no doubt. But the text in chapter 18.1 speaks of Jesus moving across the Kidron Valley. But, other than that, to the Garden of Gethsemane, but other than that, there is no, as far as I'm aware, that I've noticed at least, no further information about the location of this gathering.

So, I'm not too sanguine about us calling it the upper room discourse. I guess in terms of overall biblical content, that's fine, but if we're just describing John, that's not his term. Another term that's used to describe it, of course, is the farewell discourse.

This is probably getting something that we're deriving more from the content of John. And I would say that this idea somewhat fits the idea of John, but not totally. Because there's no doubt that Jesus is telling them that he is leaving.

He's departing and they can't follow him. So, it is indeed a farewell of sorts. But Jesus is not saying to them that he is leaving them alone.

He's not saying goodbye to them in a sense of finality that they will never, ever see him again in any sense. Because Jesus makes it very plain in this passage that he will see them again, at least in some sense of the word, and that he will come to them. The question is, will he come to them personally after the resurrection, or will he come to them through the Spirit permanently until he does come at eschatological times to judge the earth? So, there may be as many as three ways in which Jesus could be coming to them as we look at it in this material.

So, is it a farewell discourse? Yes and no. Some have described it as a testamentary discourse. By the term testamentary discourse, scholars mean that this material is Jesus' last will and testament, as it were.

That he is speaking to his people as if he were on his deathbed, so to speak. Much as Jacob did that at the end of the book of Genesis, much as Paul wrote 2 Timothy in this sort of way, perhaps 2 Peter as well in the New Testament is written with this sort of thing in mind. Again, however, Jesus is indeed leaving, and his death is the assumption here, I think.

But there are some similarities, but I don't know that we ought to call this a testament of Jesus, as some have done. Theologically, I think it's very important for us to notice, if we're going to stress the idea of his testament or his farewell to them, that he is absolutely not abandoning the disciples. He is simply leaving, but he is sending another helper advocate to be with them who will take care of them in his absence.

And that advocate, that helper, the Holy Spirit, will basically modulate or transform the presence of Jesus to them. Jesus will be speaking to them through the Spirit, and the Spirit is Jesus' presence in their midst, not metaphysically or personally, but the Spirit functions through Jesus as the one who reminds them of Jesus, who teaches them and reminds them of what they need to hear, again, from Jesus and help them to remember what Jesus has taught. So, you might say the Holy Spirit is Christocentric.

The Holy Spirit is not coming to them to take them on to a new chapter, a new departure from the teaching of Jesus. Rather, the Spirit is coming to tell them about Jesus and to remind them of everything that Jesus has taught them so far. So with all that in mind, we could perhaps describe the discourse not as the upper room or the farewell discourse, but instead as the transformation of presence until return discourse.

But somehow that doesn't quite have a ring to it, so I doubt that's going to catch on. In any event, that's one way to think about the theology of what's happening in this discourse, whether or not it is a catchy term that we can use in the future. So first, some geographical material that will perhaps help us understand what's going on here.

In Jerusalem, we have the Temple Mount. In Old Testament times, the hill to the south of the Temple Mount is called the City of David, the oldest part of Jerusalem. This was often called in the Bible, I think, Mount Zion.

However, today there is another part of Jerusalem, the Western Hill, on the other side of the valley here that's called Mount Zion. It's on this other Mount Zion, this more modern use of the term, where much of the material that goes on in John 13 and in the Synoptic Parallels is thought to have occurred. The house of Caiaphas, the high priest, is supposed to be found here.

Further on up toward the current Jaffa Gate is where the Palace of Herod was believed to be, where probably the Roman governors hung out when they came to Jerusalem, where it seems to be most likely that Jesus would have had his hearing before Pontius Pilate. So, this area here in the Western Hill, what's often today called Mount Zion, perhaps would have been where, from the Synoptic tradition, the last meal of Jesus with the disciples would have taken place. I suppose from here Jesus

would have perhaps come over this way to get to, eventually, to the Garden of Gethsemane further north than where I had the pointer a moment ago.

Of course, this is traditionally where Gethsemane is. There are some very old olive trees there that look quite gnarly, but how do we know exactly where that was? So, if we were to take this map and sort of tilt it back from bottom to top, we might see something that looks a little bit like this. This is looking at the modern Mount Zion, the Western Hill, and the installation here, the large installation is called the Dormition Abbey.

It's a place that commemorates the upper room, supposedly, and this is a traditional location that's not necessarily historically verifiable. Evidently, the picture we're about to show you of the ancient paving near what is today called the Church of St. Peter Gallicantu, which has a very odd-sounding word having to do with the cock crowing, was perhaps over on the eastern slope of this Western Hill of Jerusalem. So today, if you visit this area, we'll see these ancient steps that archaeologists have concluded probably go back to the first century to the time of Jesus.

Looking up the steps, they look like this. Looking down the steps, they look more or less like this. So, if you go into the Dormition Abbey, you see a big, beautiful room full of nicely carved stones that have to do with the upper room, traditionally speaking.

There's a very interesting statue here of the crow, which is, excuse me, the rooster, the cock, which is going to crow three times. I think the picture here that's a bit hard to see is Peter having a conversation with the servant girl and denying the Lord. So, just a bit of background information and foreground information about how the story is understood today, particularly if you are a tourist in Israel.

So, in relating John 13-17 to the Synoptic tradition, we have some difficulties because when we read John 13, verse 1, NIV translates it, it was just before the Passover festival, and so the meal that is being portrayed here in John is not necessarily being explicitly portrayed as a Passover meal as it is in the Synoptic Gospels. Some have thought that the reason for this is that in the Gospel of John, the pronouncement of John the Baptist about Jesus, that he is the Lamb of God, is taken so seriously that John does not want to have any other lamb such as the Passover lamb even directly mentioned in John, but rather to focus all of the lamb imagery on Jesus himself. That is plausible, I suppose, be it as it may.

What John is saying about this meal does not exactly match up with the Synoptic tradition, and scholars who are able to deal with such things and have an interest in it have written reams of material about it, and fortunately for you, I'm not one of them because we're not going to go into all that at this time. Not to make light of the value of such work, but that's not what we're going to go into in the limited time available to us in these videos. I suppose it's possible that John is operating from a

different chronological scheme somehow and that he is describing the Passover meal here in John 13.

I suppose it's also possible that he is describing a different meal altogether which was the night before the Passover meal. It's hard to say, and part of this, of course, is tied to the fact that as we read the Synoptic tradition, there is a clear institution of the Lord's Table from the Passover meal, using some of the cups from the Passover tradition to symbolize the body and blood of Jesus, but we have no such institution ceremony in John 13. I think there is certainly room for thought here, various interpretations, and lots of issues that come to mind, and I'm making you aware of those issues if you care to do further study and research on them, but just to point out that John's approach here does differ somewhat in terms of his literary agenda, his theological purposes from the Passover meal.

This takes us back to some of our earliest discussions about what kind of a book are the Gospels. If they are books that are simply attempting to give you an exhaustive chronicle of all the events of the life of Jesus, they have certainly failed in doing that, but I don't think that's the kind of books they are, to begin with. They are books that give us selected historical traditions about Jesus, which are indeed true, but these traditions are given because of their theological import, which is tied to the author's purpose, the message the author wants to get out, and then they are creatively taught and written down in a literarily excellent manner.

So, history is not the only reason why we have these Gospels, which is not to say they are not historical, it's simply to say that they are more than historical. We have no mention, of course, in the synoptic tradition of the foot washing that Jesus does here in John 13. We have the bread and the cup ceremony, not the foot washing, just the opposite of John.

So, when we observe the foot-washing tradition that's going on here in the context of the meal, you'll notice that we are told in John 13, verse 2, the evening meal was in progress. As dinner was going on, Jesus took time to wash the disciples' feet. So, there is some debate about whether the language of reclining that you find here in this chapter, and by the way, we're going to find in the ensuing chapter where Jesus is anointed at Bethany by the family of Lazarus, we're going to find there is a question about whether this is involved in what is often called a triclinium meal.

So, the word triclinium is a sort of a Latinized form of words that basically means three couches. So, the question is that in ancient times, people of some means for special meals would arrange a triclinium in their homes. People who were extremely wealthy would have a room in their house that was set up in this fashion and they would tend to eat more meals such as this.

So, this would be a beautiful dining room with a U-shaped table with one table at the base and the other two being the upper arms of the U, and so they would eat lots of meals there. Typically, they would have a view of their gardens from the room or they would have beautiful scenic frescoes on the wall, and they would recline typically on their left elbows and eat with their right hands, I suppose, unless they were left-handed, then they would probably do it the opposite way. That would cause problems in the arrangement.

So, there are many New Testament texts that refer to this style of eating while reclining, and apparently all of these are referring to meals that are eaten in the triclinium style. So, I would say this is the plausible background, and probably even more than plausible, too likely, of what we read in John 13 when we read about Jesus having announced that one of the disciples would betray him, and Peter wants to know who it was and starts to ask John. We see in verse 25 that the beloved disciple, I just equated those two, leaning back against Jesus, verse 25, he asked him, Lord, who is it? Why would he need to lean back against him? Well, we obviously have lots of pictures of the Last Supper of Jesus, this being obviously the most famous of them all, and apparently, Da Vinci was betraying the beloved disciple as this individual right here, unless you have read Dan Brown's Da Vinci Code book, and if you have, then don't believe anything that you read in there, that would be a huge mistake.

But the triclinium style of meal was probably something that looked a bit more like this. If you look at some of the ancient dictionaries of Roman antiquity and study a bit about the triclinium, there is a quotation in this particular article that each person was considered to be below him to whose breast his own head approached, which is sort of hard to understand sentence, but when you unpack it, what it's saying is that, as we just read in John chapter 13 and verse 25, leaning back against Jesus. What that's saying is that every person that you would lean back against would be superior to you.

So, if you were the person to whom a person who was leaning in front of you was leaning back to talk to you, then there would be a careful arrangement of those who sat at the table. So, if I may perhaps just sort of lean myself for a moment here on this table in this fashion, I don't know if the camera can catch up to me, I guess we're good, then I would be leaning like this and eating in this fashion with my right hand, and then however the status of the individuals in the meal would be understood by the host, individuals would be arranged on down this way. So the person here would be a person who would be viewed as my inferior.

This person would need to lean back over their shoulder to talk to me. And of course, if I were leaning against someone who was on my other side, that person would be viewed as being superior to me. So evidently in some sense like this, when it says in 13:25 that the beloved disciple leaned back against Jesus and asked him who it was,

the person would have had to have gone something like this over his left shoulder or turning all the way around over his right shoulder to speak to Jesus.

And this is likely what the text is portraying for us here. So the triclinium meal as it's portrayed in this particular source that I found online, you can see the address here if you want to check it out, says that at each of the tables, typically this is a way for nine people, I'm not sure how Jesus did it with 12 disciples, perhaps four people at a table instead of three, that the person who is first at each table, Latin would be *sumus*, a person of medium status in the middle, and then *emus* would be the least person at each table. So, the person of greatest status in the whole banquet, the whole meal, would be the person sitting at this table because everyone else would be, in a sense, leaning back into this person's presence.

This is not exactly the way you often see this portrayed in different ways the Last Supper, if indeed John 13 is the Last Supper, not the way you often see John 13 portrayed. Commonly you see John 13 portrayed with Jesus at this table, which in modern Western culture would tend to think of as the head table. So, Jesus would be in the middle and the beloved disciple would be reclining against him.

Let me get this straight here, so Jesus would be here and the beloved disciple would be here, I guess. Where the rest of the people were, I guess, is not really made altogether clear in this. I've seen other images of it where the priority is started on the left side and going around this way, but even when I've seen it this way, Jesus is placed in the middle of this table with the beloved disciple in this location.

I have my doubts about that as well. So, if this is correct, if this was the typical way in which things were ordered, then Jesus would have been here at number one as the most authoritative person, the person of the most status. The beloved disciple would have been here where number two is, and then some other arrangement of the rest of the disciples.

So, whether we would have had Judas somewhere nearby where Jesus could easily pass a morsel, Peter somewhere nearby where Peter could more or less easily say, pss, John, who is it? Find out. It's hard to know beyond that. So, there are other portrayals of triclinia in ancient times.

This is some sort of a wood cutting from the stone triclinium which is found at Pompeii in the ruins of the volcanic eruption there. I believe if you look around online, you can see a replica or you can see a picture of this very room. From Sepphoris, which is just north of Nazareth, there is a floor mosaic that portrays a triclinium in this fashion.

This, of course, is not, strictly speaking, a three-couch, although it is a U-shaped affair. There are not three people at each of these low couches. So, you see the people laying on their elbows here.

You see the servants who are evidently taking care of the vittles or the wine or whatever. And there's no way to tell, I guess, from this exactly who is viewed as having the most status. A fresco also from Pompeii gives us another picture of it.

In this one, people do not seem to be reclining so much as almost sitting at a higher table. So, it's a bit difficult from this to know exactly what's going on here. One image that circulates online, and I'm not sure to whom to attribute it because I've seen it in lots of places and I don't see a copyright on it and I don't wish to make any money from it, but here's a very common way that it's portrayed.

The beloved disciple is placed here with Jesus and Judas here. So, Peter, hearing Jesus say that one of you will betray me, somehow gets John's attention and by jerking his head or something to John is saying the beloved disciple, you know, ask him, ask him, you know, what's up, ask him. So, in that case, Jesus would have simply taken the morsel and handed it over his shoulder back to Judas.

The problem with that is this would have made Jesus inferior to Judas in status if this arrangement were the way it was. So, what do we make of all this? We know something of the custom. We have varying images of what in ancient times the tables were set up to look like.

We have differences of opinion as to how things were actually carried out. We have a different number of individuals at the banquet that fits neatly into the three tables, each with three persons, which is seen as sort of the standard way of doing it. I'm not sure beyond just noticing that everybody was reclining in John 13, which of these arrangements would make the most sense.

I tend to think that the principle that the person upon whose chest you look back at upon whom you recline is your superior rather than vice versa does make a lot of sense. So, if Jesus was viewed as he took his place at the table as the head of the disciples and indeed as he washed their feet, he refers to himself as the master, the Lord. If I, the Lord, have washed your feet.

So, it would make it only more fitting if indeed he had been sitting at this highest place of authority at the table. So, using this image as the way it would work, then Jesus would be where this image says Peter is and things would have then gone from the greatest to the least in this order. The beloved disciple would have been the middle person at this table.

I'm not sure exactly if Peter would have been next or where Judas was in all this arrangement. I think this goes beyond our ability to know for sure. I'm sure there are various theories that have a more or less clear reasoning behind them.

So, you can pursue this more fully if you would like. So now thinking about the discourse as a whole, not just chapter 13, how does this layout for us? If you stop and think about it, you can see that the discourse sort of has a preamble and a postlude leading into the proper discourse, the discourse that's really a discourse. We're often told that the upper room discourse or the farewell discourse or the transformation of presence until return discourse, as I've termed it, that this discourse actually is not so much all the way from chapter 13 through chapter 17 because Jesus isn't really talking in the first part of the discourse so much.

He's giving the disciples an example here by washing their feet. Although he does say a few things in the process of that, he's not discoursing as it were. As you know, the discourse ends with Jesus praying to the Father.

A prayer is not a discourse. A prayer is his intercession, first of all for himself, then for his disciples, and then for those who will believe in them eventually. So, the discourse proper has to be really the section in chapters 13 through 16 where Jesus is stressing the coming of the Spirit.

The discourse then begins in chapter 13. The very first thing Jesus is talking about is his departure and that it's imperative when he leaves for them to love one another as he has loved them. In the midst of this then, I think he shows that he is providing for them the Holy Spirit who will enable them to love one another as he has loved them all the way through to the end of chapter 16.

Then in the prayer at the end of chapter 17, he is praying for the disciples to be one as he and the Father are one. I think in a sense, the teaching about the new commandment that they should love one another as he has loved them so that all men might know that they are his disciples is an interesting way of starting the discourse and the way in which everything ends at the end of the prayer in chapter 17 is that the disciples may be one as he and the Father are one. That is an interesting way to end the disciples because just as in chapter 13, the love commandment is given so that everyone might believe that you are my disciples, the unity statement is made in chapter 17 at the end so that all men might know that you are my disciples, that they might believe in me.

So, the two bookends, as it were, there tend to make a lot of sense as the way in which the whole discourse is framed. As we look through John 13-17, there is not just an unbroken line of words from Jesus. There is, of course, the foot washing in chapter 13, which leads to some conversation with Jesus and Peter and then later with Jesus and the beloved disciple regarding the identity of the betrayer.

Even once you get into the discourse proper, if we want to call it that, from the end of chapters 13-16, there are several things that we might call themes, most of which are questions coming from the disciples. For example, in chapter 13-36, Peter asks a question, leading Jesus to make a comment. There are other interruptions, if you want to call them that, from other disciples, 14:8, 14:22, and Jesus realizes in 16:17-19 that the disciples are wondering what he's thinking and what is he actually saying when he says, a little while, a little while.

So, there are some interactive or dialogical moments in the discourse. It's not just Jesus speaking with no interaction from the disciples. In fact, about halfway through, at the end of chapter 14, there is a change of location.

14:31, Jesus says, get up, let's go. It's not exactly clear where they are going, whether he is speaking the rest of it to them as they walk or whether they've come to a different place. Chapter 18, verse 1, does say they left and they went across the Kidron to the Garden of Gethsemane.

18:1, when he had finished praying, Jesus left with the disciples and crossed the Kidron Valley. So, wherever they were, they were west of that. And on the other side, there was a garden here and his disciples went into it.

So, this would help us then grasp the overall flow and structure of the discourse. Looking now at John chapter 13 itself, as our habit has been, we'll talk about the way the context flows. We're given the nature of the setting of the meal in the first three verses, and it's portrayed as being something that is before the Passover, which is sort of a difficult thing to understand exactly.

Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. That part is not difficult to understand, given the way in which Jesus, the good shepherd, has cared for his sheep throughout this gospel, as stated in chapter 10, particularly here in chapter 13. It's amazing that it makes this point.

So, 13:1, Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave the world. And we already saw this expression in chapter 12 as well, that the hour had come. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

That last expression could be understood in a couple of different ways. He loved them and to the bitter end of his ministry, you might say, or you could take it that he loved them completely. He loved them to the very end.

He loved them fully to the nth degree, something along that line. So, we're given the act of foot washing itself in verses four and five. He got up from the meal.

He took off his outer robe, garment, whatever, and wrapped the towel around his waist, pouring water into a basin. Evidently, he carried the basin around with him to each of the individual disciples, began to wash their feet, and dried them with the towel that was wrapped around him. When he got to Peter, Peter, of course, being the person who often talks first and thinks later, Peter probably gave voice to what all the rest of the disciples had been thinking.

Why are you washing our feet? So, Peter says to Jesus, Lord, are you going to wash my feet? Jesus replies you don't realize now what I'm doing later you will understand. Peter, realizes that the situation is totally anomalous, perhaps like Matthew's version of the baptism of Jesus, where John the Baptist protests and says, you should be baptizing me, not be baptizing you. Peter says, no, you will never wash my feet.

This is vintage Peter, isn't it? Peter never does things by half measures. Peter didn't say, are you sure this is the right thing to do? Peter said, no, this isn't going to happen. So, Jesus replies just as forcefully unless I wash you, you have no part with me.

So, Peter quickly abandons his previous strategy in verse 8 for a totally new one. Instead of not having any washing at all, Peter now wants not just his feet to be washed, but his hands and his head as well. So, you have to love Peter, don't you, when you see him jumping back and forth like this.

I wish we had more Peters in the church today. I know I'm not one of them. Sometimes I wish I was.

Jesus then explains that those who have already had a bath only need to wash their feet. Their whole body is clean and you are clean. So here the symbol of foot washing, I think, moves simply from being an example of humility, which is why Peter protested.

He didn't think it was right that Jesus should be washing his feet. Now Jesus is showing him that it has more to do than just with humility. It has to do with cleansing.

So, the statement, you are clean, is followed by, though not every one of you. For he knew who was going to betray him and that was why he said not everyone was clean. So, we have this sense of foreboding, this mysterious sense in which cleansing is a part of foot washing as well, but it doesn't apply to everybody.

And by implication, of course, it's talking about the one who will be revealed as the betrayer here in a moment, which is Judas. So, when Jesus finishes the act of foot washing and the dialogue with Peter, he then explains to the disciples what's been

going on here in verses 12 through 20. When he finished washing their feet, he put his clothes back on, returned to his place, and said, Do you understand what I've done to you? You call me the teacher and the Lord, and rightly so, for that's what I am.

Now that I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you should wash one another's feet. I've set before you an example. You should do as I have done for you.

Truly, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Interesting, in light of the repeated ways in which Jesus speaks of himself as the Father's messenger. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed, and he doesn't stop there.

Knowledge alone isn't how you are blessed by God. You're blessed if you do what you know, which I think is a very good thing to keep in mind for those of us who are heavily engaged in academic work with the Bible, that the game that we're playing is not just the paper game. We're not just trying to get insight and information.

We're looking for that information to lead us to a way of transcribing the character of God and living for God in our own lives. So, Jesus makes it very clear here that he is providing something for the disciples that should be an example or a model or a way that they should follow in their own lives in the future, and they should do it. This teaching then is truly remarkable for us because none of us have the status he had by any means, yet we find it very difficult to humbly serve others and to take the role of the servant as he did here.

Jesus follows this initial discussion of the interpretation of foot washing by going into some foreboding words about the betrayer. In verse 18 through 20, he says, I'm not referring to all of you. I know those I've chosen.

This is to fulfill the passage of scripture. He who shared my bread has turned against me. I'm telling you now before it happens so that when it does happen, you'll believe that I am who I am.

In other words, he's saying, I'm saying this to you already so that once things go bad, you realize it wasn't a surprise to me. I knew exactly what was going to happen. After he had said this then, in verse 21, Jesus was troubled in spirit, and so we have more of the explicit announcement of the betrayal of Judas, which has already been alluded to in a previous verse.

Verse 11, I guess, would be the previous verse. So, he says it right out in so many words, truly I say to you, one of you is going to betray me. Disciples are amazed at this, and they want to know who Jesus is talking about.

So Peter, by gesturing to John, evidently gets John, the beloved disciple, I should say, to ask Jesus who it is. Leaning back against Jesus, verse 25, he asks him who it is. Jesus does not say in so many words who it is.

Rather, he replies that it is the one to whom I give the piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish. There is the practice, perhaps in the Passover meal, and we're not clear that this is portrayed as a Passover meal, of dipping the bread in the bitter herbs, or also in the relish that is made with honey is very sweet. I think the term for that is the haroshef.

So, it's not exactly clear what is happening here in that regard, but dipping the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, and as soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. From previous teaching about the betrayal, we know that this is not a surprise. Jesus simply said to Judas, what you are to do, do quickly, and no one around them knew exactly what that meant.

Some thought that since Judas had the money, he was going to go out and buy things that they would need for the Passover, or perhaps they thought that he was going to give an offering to the poor. So, we then have one of the darkest statements in the Gospel of John, as soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out, and it was night. So, this will conclude our discussion of John 13.

We'll come back now and talk about some of the further things related to the Passover, but we'll pick up here at John 13:31 in the next video because it is pretty much the introduction to the rest of the discourse. So, when we think about John 13, we have interesting art. There are lots of images you can find throughout history of how the way in which the portrayal of Peter talking to Peter.

Here he is about to wash his feet. He has his hands on his ankle, but Peter is holding up things here by insisting that it isn't appropriate. So Bondone wants to portray that in a 700-year-old painting there.

So now we come to the matter of foot washing and just think about it in terms of biblical and cultural background. In the Bible, priests sometimes needed to wash their feet and their hands, but primarily foot washing was not so much a matter of ritual purity for the rest of the people, it was a matter of hospitality. In the famous text of Genesis 18, which alludes to the angel of the Lord visiting Abraham and Sarah, there is an offer of washing feet.

And several other places in John, as well as in the book of Judges, and in 1 Samuel, and 2 Samuel, we get to the New Testament, in Luke 7, Jesus remarks that a wealthy person in whose home he was having a meal, that that person did not wash his feet when he entered. In John 13, 1 Timothy 5 is a chapter about widows and which widows are worthy of church support. In that chapter, chapter 5, verse 10, 1

Timothy, Paul tells Timothy that widows who have shown their Christian virtue by showing hospitality by washing the saints' feet are to be considered worthy of support by the church if they are in need.

So, there's a great deal of emphasis on foot washing in the Bible, including the New Testament. Most of it seems to be just pretty much a matter of what you do when you have guests. In ancient times, walking around in dirt streets would have been quite a messy affair.

You have lots of animals going up and down the streets, oxen, donkeys, whatever, and you walk through piles of manure and things like that, to be honest. And so, garbage is strewn around, and so your feet are going to be filthy after being out very much. And so, you want to get them clean before you can really relax when you come into someone's home.

One would think that someone keeping a nice home would not want people coming in walking around with the messy feet either. So, although it's a great show of hospitality, it also is to the homeowner's advantage to keep the feet clean of the guests. The betrayal that is portrayed here in John 13 is portrayed intertextually.

It's very interesting for us to take this passage in John 13, verse 18, and look at Psalm 41 in a way that is somehow viewed as anticipating what happens in John 13, verse 18. The NIV translates it, he who shared my bread has turned against me. Turned against me is a sort of a way of taking the metaphor of lifted up his heel against me or kicked me in the back or something like that we might say.

So, this is a quotation from Psalm 41, and I think it would behoove us to take just a moment to look at Psalm 41 and see what is going on here and how Jesus was looking at Psalm 41. We hear people say lots of things about finding Christ in the Psalms and the nature of the Psalms as messianic documents. To my mind, a lot of this is rather simplistically stated, and people are looking at the Psalms as if they are sort of prophecies of Jesus, sort of neglecting the immediate context of the Psalm and its use in Israel's worship, but not really taking it in its own right to much of an account.

When we turn back to Psalm 41, I was in Isaiah 41, that won't work. Psalm 41. We're reading a Psalm which is for the most part, I think, a Psalm of lament, a Psalm where the Psalmist is complaining about those who are out to get him.

It starts off by blessing those who have regard for the weak and how the Lord preserves and protects them, verses 1 through 3. The Psalmist then prays, and this will perhaps be a bit shocking to you if you're thinking of this as strictly speaking a messianic Psalm, a Psalm about Jesus. The Psalm then prays, Lord have mercy on me for I have sinned against you. My enemies say of me in malice, when will he die and

will his name perish? When one of them comes to see me, he speaks falsely while his heart gathers slander, and then he goes out and spreads it around.

So, the Psalmist is essentially acknowledging his own lack, his own sin, his own failure to fully follow a God, but he also is aware that he has lots of people who are out to get him. So, he talks a lot about his enemies. He says, they imagine the worst against me saying even a vile disease has afflicted him, he will never get up from the place where he lies.

In other words, his disease will be terminal. This leads us then to the verse that Jesus has referred to, Psalm 41 verse 9, even my close friend, someone I trusted, someone who shared my bread has turned against me. But may you have mercy on me Lord, raise me up that I may repay them.

I know that you are pleased with me for my enemy does not triumph over me, because of my integrity you uphold me and set me in your presence forever. Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting, amen and amen. So, when we notice Psalm 41 in its immediate context, the Psalmist is acknowledging that he has lots of enemies who are out to get him.

He's also acknowledging his own lack of perfection in his walk before God, but he's confident that God will save him from his enemies and use him in the future to have a fruitful life. What is going on then when Jesus refers back to this Psalm and picks this verse that my close friend has lifted up his heel against me? I would have the viewpoint that Jesus isn't regarding the Psalm so much as a specific prediction of him, as it is something that flows out of the life of the Psalmist immediately in that historical period. And that in the providence of God, the betrayal that the Psalmist felt has been turned up a notch when it is applied to Jesus.

In other words, all the betrayals of the Davidic figure who is in Psalm 41, that figure historically experienced is a betrayal that really can't hold a candle to the betrayal that Jesus experienced. So, Jesus is saying the same type of thing that is happening in Psalm 41 to the historical Davidic figure, whether King David or another Davidic-related person, is now coming back in an even greater way in the life of Jesus, who is, of course, the son of David. Jesus is the ultimate Davidic figure.

So, instead of taking this as some sort of a prediction, directly speaking, and losing sight of its original context, I think we would want to notice the betrayal that went on originally historically reflected in the Psalm is something that anticipates the betrayal that Jesus himself is experiencing at the hand of Judas. Now all we know about this Psalm is that it is portrayed as a Psalm of David in the heading, but the headings are likely not original to the Psalm, although they have some antiquity. So, if the Psalm is related to David in some sense of the word at least, whether it means that he wrote it or he approved it or it reflects the experiences that he had as the

king of Israel, we wonder perhaps whether it's referring to a specific incident in David's life.

Although we don't know this for sure, it seems at least plausible to me that David is referring to the time period of Absalom's rebellion and how his advisor Ahithophel went over to be an advisor to Absalom instead of sticking with David. You can read about this in 2 Samuel chapter 15 through 17, and especially interesting pieces that talk about Ahithophel are 15:31, 34, 16, 20 to 23, and a few of the verses there in chapter 17. You may recall that Ahithophel's advice was accepted by Absalom for a while, but later on, Absalom got some advice from a different advisor and so he disregarded what Ahithophel told him.

So, guess what happened to Ahithophel then? He ended his own life by suicide. Of course, this is exactly what happened to Judas. Is that simply a coincidence or is that something that is significant in the providence of God as we interpret the scripture? So, we're dealing with something here that hermeneutics profs sometimes call typology, foreshadowing of New Testament events in Old Testament events.

I like to think of it as Jesus putting himself through the beach, so to speak, walking on the beach of time and putting his feet in the footprints left by Israel in their own historical times. So, whether you think this is a reliable hermeneutic or not, I think it is used sometimes in the New Testament to describe Jesus' relationship to David and to the Old Testament, and I think it is at least a plausible understanding here. Something was going on in King David's life, in a Davidic figure's life at the very least, a betrayal that Jesus is looking back on and thinking about.

He evidently knows enough about Psalm 41 that he's interpreting what is happening to him now in light of what he sees happening to his Davidic predecessor in the Old Testament. So, Jesus is understanding his own life, his own betrayal, in light of the betrayal that the Davidic king experienced in Psalm 41. Whether it is the betrayal of Ahithophel, who betrayed David and then committed suicide or not, the text doesn't directly say.

To my mind, at least, it is a plausible understanding of the passage. Give that some more thought, and come to your own conclusions. Finally, how do we take this foot washing today? What are we going to do with this text in John 13, which speaks to foot washing? Apparently, in the text itself, the text is a model of humility and humility shown by reciprocal service.

In other words, if we really care about one another and if we are people of true humility, we won't just talk about our humility, we'll serve other people with our lives. We'll use up our life. Instead of doing something that will exalt ourselves, we'll use up our life's energy to exalt other people and to help them.

So, Jesus, of all people, did what typically in ancient cultures a low person in the household or a slave would have done for the guests. Jesus himself took that role. And so that amazing thing that made Peter balk at first to getting his feet washed to show us just how important it is for us to, as it were, put on the towel and wash other people's feet.

But there's another part of this foot washing that I think doesn't get nearly enough attention. And that is that the foot washing is something of an act of cleansing. When Peter protests Jesus washing his feet, Jesus acknowledges that there's something going on here related to cleansing.

And Peter doesn't need to have Jesus wash him all over. He's already clean. All he needs is to have his feet washed.

We wonder in light of that imagery whether Jesus is speaking about what today we might call theologically progressive sanctification. Is Jesus thinking about washing Peter's feet simply because he knows that Peter has already become a follower of his and has already become cleansed? He's had a bath, as it were, by his conversion to following Jesus. Now all he needs to do is to clean up his life from the difficulties that he faces and the wrong responses he makes in daily life.

So, is it possible that what Jesus is speaking about here is, to put it into propositional terms, what 1 John is describing when it speaks about the believer in sin? Is Jesus perhaps saying something like it says in 1 John chapter 1, that if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, his blood continues to cleanse us from all sin. If we confess our sin, he's faithful and just to forgive us from sin, to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Perhaps, perhaps not.

You can think about that and see if you think this is a valid correlation of the text. In any event, Jesus does indeed speak of this in the sense of cleansing. With that in mind, I think there is a sense in which the foot washing is foreshadowing the cross.

The foot washing in itself was not a redemptive event, but it was Jesus doing an extremely humbling thing for the disciples. Of course, what could be more humbling than foot washing? Not too many things. One of them would indeed be crucifixion, which, as we note the way Paul puts it in Philippians 2, is about the most humiliating thing that one could imagine experiencing.

The foot washing, perhaps, is the foreshadowing of the cross. I would think that when Jesus, in the next few verses after where we're stopping here today, says to the disciples, I'm giving you a new commandment that you should love one another as I have loved you. How has Jesus loved the disciples? The most recent example of loving the disciples is washing their feet and showing them by example how much they should love one another.

Of course, we're told in John 13 early on in the chapter, in the first couple of verses, that having loved his disciples, he loved them to the very end, to the bitter end. He loved them completely. His complete love for them didn't stop at washing their feet.

His complete love for them certainly included washing their feet. Washing their feet was, as I'm thinking here, the last redemptive act that he did for them before dying on the cross. What do we do about foot washing today? How do we enact this event today? Certainly, no one would gainsay the idea that we need to serve each other humbly.

Instead of waiting to be served, we need to serve and to give our lives a ransom for many. As Jesus put it about himself in Matthew chapter 20, verse 28. We see churches that occasionally on youth retreats have the young people wash each other's feet.

We see churches that have clergy wash the feet of people, maybe once a year during the Passion Week, something along those lines. So, it's something that is trotted out now and then as something like a drama in a church, an object lesson that's played out to give people not just a sermon, but a demonstration of what they need to do for one another. I've even seen foot washing being done at the recent weddings that I have attended where the bride and groom wash each other's feet.

I've been to one where they even washed the feet of their parents, which was quite touching. Although I have to say it took quite a while and made the wedding quite a long ceremony. But as you know, there may be some amongst you who are aware of foot washing as a normal practice in the church, something that's put up almost at the level of baptism and the Lord's table.

This is often done in churches that tied themselves to the Mennonite tradition, the Peace Church movement, churches like that, where probably once every month or every three months in connection with the bread and cup ceremony in the church, they'll actually have a ceremony where they wash one another's feet. I'm not personally convinced that Jesus intended for something like that to occur, but I'm certainly not convinced that there's anything wrong with it either. I think it might be a good idea for all of us to consider something like that because we need to be reminded of our need to serve one another in a humble way.

As we conclude then our study of John 13, let's hope that not simply the words of the chapter, but two very amazing images are burnt deeply into our minds. First of all, that of our Lord setting his example for us by washing our feet. And secondly, that of our Lord showing who would be his betrayer.

Hopefully the more we think about him washing our feet, the less we will need to worry about whether we are the one he was speaking of when he said, one of you will betray me.

This is Dr. David Turner in his teaching on the Gospel of John. This is session 15, the Farewell Discourse, Introduction, Foot washing and Betrayal, John 13:1-30.