

John – An In-Depth Study

[Part 16]

John 12:42-43 [NIV] *“Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved praise from men more than praise from God.”*

Jesus did **not** speak entirely to deaf ears, even among the Jewish authorities, some believed in Jesus but were afraid to confess their faith.

To admit this belief in public would have brought ridicule and rejection.

Such admission of faith in Jesus would have led to being excommunicated from the synagogue, which was their livelihood, and the loss of their prestigious place in the community.

Jesus had warned against this rejection of Him in public. [**Matthew 10:32-33**]

The praise of other human beings is fickle and short-lived.

We should be far more concerned about God’s eternal acceptance than the temporary approval of other people. [Please download and study our article ‘*Social Esteem – The Last Sin To Go*’ listed under ‘*Christian Living*’]

John 12:44-50 [NIV] *“Then Jesus cried out, ‘When a man believes in me, he does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me. When he looks at me, he sees the one who sent me. I have come into the world as a light, so that no-one who believes in me should stay in darkness. As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it. There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day. For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say.’”*

According to the apostle John, these are the last words of public teaching given by Jesus.

Hereafter Jesus would teach His disciples and would stand before Pilate.

Most people wonder what God is like. How can we know God the Father when He doesn’t make Himself visible?

In these statements of Jesus, makes it very clear that if we study the person and words of Jesus we will come to know what God the Father is like.

Jesus came to earth the first time, **not** to judge people but to offer to all humanity a way to salvation from death and eternal life, by accepting Him as their Saviour, Creator and Sustainer of life.

When Jesus comes again those who have accepted Him and His words will receive salvation and eternal life. [**1 Corinthians 15:51-57; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**]

All who now are blinded to Jesus’ offer and words will be resurrected back to human life and then have their first chance to understand Jesus’ words, in fact the whole of the Christian Bible.

They will then, only after such understanding, be judged by the words that Jesus spoke, that is recorded in the Christian Bible. [**Revelation 21:1-8**]

This shows the perfect justice of God.

Every human being will have this chance to accept or to reject Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord. God will **not** force them to decide one way or the other, He only makes clear the outcome of the choice we make.

John 13:1-17 [NIV] *“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. The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel round his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped round him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, ‘Lord, are you going to wash my feet?’ Jesus replied, ‘You do not realise now what I am doing, but later you will understand.’ ‘No,’ said Peter, ‘you shall never wash my feet.’ Jesus answered, ‘Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.’ ‘Then, Lord,’ Simon Peter replied, ‘not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!’ 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.’ For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean. 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. ‘You call me “Teacher” and “Lord”, and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.”*

All that Jesus said from this time onward was given to prepare His disciples for His death and resurrection, events which would change their lives forever.

Let us study these intimate conversations and allow them to change our lives dramatically and forever.

There are few incidents in the recorded life of Jesus that show the character of Jesus and His love for humanity more than this recorded incident.

Jesus knew that it was not long now until He took His place on the very throne of God.

Such a thought might well have filled Jesus with pride, yet He performed the work lowest household slave, washing the feet of travellers.

Some humans consider themselves too distinguished or important to perform menial services to other people, **not** Jesus.

It was at the very time when Jesus was about to return to the Father, that He went to the limit in His service of humanity.

The wonderful thing about Jesus is that His nearness to God the Father brought Him nearer to human beings.

Jesus also knew He was about to be betrayed by human beings, even His closest friends, the disciples, yet His love for humanity became greater.

Luke 22:24 [NIV] *“Also a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest.”*

Even at the last meal that Jesus would have with His disciples before His sacrifice on the cross, His disciples were still arguing about matters of precedence and prestige, in the Kingdom that Jesus had been talking about.

It may well have been this very argument that made Jesus wash the feet of the disciples, to re-direct their minds towards serving humanity as He did.

A very simple yet powerful example of love for other human beings that all Christians should follow.

The washing of the whole body is direct reference to baptism by total immersion, which is still today a way into the Christian church.

Romans 6:1-5 [NIV] *“What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning, so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection.”*

Paul expands on the meaning of baptism showing it is symbolic of starting a new life with Jesus Christ.

John 13:18-30 [NIV] *“I am not referring to all of you; I know those I have chosen. But this is to fulfil the scripture: ‘He who shares my bread has lifted up his heel against me.’ ‘I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that I am He. I tell you the truth, whoever accepts anyone I send accepts me; and whoever accepts me accepts the one who sent me.’ 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.’ His disciples stared at one another, at a loss to know which of them he meant. One of them, the disciple whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to him. Simon Peter motioned to this disciple and said, ‘Ask him which one he means.’ Leaning back against Jesus, he asked him, ‘Lord, who is it?’ 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. As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. ‘What you are about to do, do quickly,’ Jesus told him, but no-one at the meal understood why Jesus said this to him. 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. As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night.”*

I will **not** expand on these verses as they are already fully covered in our article on this website under heading ‘Judas Iscariot’, found under main heading ‘Ancestors, Learning From’.]

John 13:31-32 [NIV] *“When he was gone, Jesus said, ‘Now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once.’”*

Judas’ act was but a step in the process of glorification of Jesus Christ, on the cross.

The greatest glory in life is linked to sacrifice.

In Jesus Christ, God the Father was glorified through His obedience to God the Father.

This is the only way anyone can show their love and trust of a leader, obedience to their will.

The only way a child can honour a parent is by obedience to their parent’s will.

Jesus also brought glory and honour on Himself by the incarnation and the cross.

There is no glory and honour like being loved.

If God had remained aloof, untouched by any pain that humans may experience, humans might have feared God, admired God, but never loved God.

John 13:33-35 [NIV] *“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 new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.’”*

How had Jesus loved His disciples?

Selflessly – Even the greatest human love in part is selfish. We often think, maybe unconsciously, what are we going to get out of this love I have for others?

Happiness or the thrill we experience or the emptiness and the loneliness which we will suffer if this love fails or is rejected.

Most times it is our happiness we are seeking when we offer love and affection to others.

Jesus never thought of Himself, His one desire was to give Himself and all He had to others.

Sacrificially – There was no limit to what Jesus' love would give, nor to where His love would go.

The Greek word used when referring to God's love is "*agapé*" meaning a spontaneous love, irrespective of the rights or response of the person receiving that love. It is a sacrificial love where self is set aside in order to show this love to others.

Such a love is beyond any human beings ability to produce, it has to be the work of the Holy Spirit working in and through us. [**Galatians 5:22-25**]

Understandingly – Jesus knew all the weaknesses of His disciples, yet He never stopped loving them. We can never know a person completely until we spend time with them. Occasional contact will only show others at their best. This is one of the reasons why God instituted marriage between a man and a woman, so that two people could know intimately the weaknesses and different responses of another human being and learn to still love them.

Forgivingly – Jesus' disciples all forsook Him in His hour of need, they were blind and insensitive, also slow to learn and understand His teaching. But the love that Jesus had for them, for all their failures, was an enduring love built of forgiveness.

Lasting love within a marriage has to include all these attributes, and this is the love we are to learn in preparation for the Christian church's marriage to Jesus Christ. [**Revelation 19:6-9**]

John 13:36-38 [NIV] "*Simon Peter asked him, 'Lord, where are you going?' Jesus replied, 'Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later.' Peter asked, 'Lord, why can't I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.' Then Jesus answered, 'Will you really lay down your life for me? I tell you the truth, before the cock crows, you will disown me three times!'*"

In our enthusiasm, it is easy to make promises, but God knows the extent of our commitment.

Romans 12:1-3 [NIV] "*Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed 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. For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.*"

Paul understood this same weakness in human beings.

After showing the Roman church and all Christians what our response to the sacrificial love that Jesus had for all humanity should be.

Paul warns us **not** to over-estimate our ability to make these dramatic changes in our lives.

John 14:1-3 [NIV] "*Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare*

a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”

In a very short time life for the disciples was going to collapse in chaos all around them.

Jesus was telling them, and all Christians, that at such a time, the only thing that we can do is trust in God.

There comes times when we have to believe and accept when we cannot prove or understand.

What does this statement about Father’s house and rooms mean?

To the disciples the term “*Father’s house*” was referring to the temple with its Holy of holies depicting the presence of God.

Within the outer courts were many rooms that were used by the priests on duty.

The Greek word used for “*house*” is “*ōikia*” is translated “*household*” in **Philippians 4:22**, rightly so for the word means home, residence and by implication the family within that home.

The context of Jesus’ statement is His return to this earth, when disciples of Jesus Christ will be acting as priests/teachers in the created family [Kingdom] of God. [**Revelation 1:4-6; Revelation 5:9-10**]

The Greek word translated “*place*” is “*tōpōs*” meaning position, licence and opportunity.

The preparation that Jesus is overseeing in heaven as our High Priest and Saviour is the work in us of the Holy Spirit.

John 16:7-8 [NIV] *“But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:”*

The initial work of the Holy Spirit is to convict us of sin so we come to a position of repentance, then to show us where acceptable righteousness is to be found and to constantly remind us that we all will face Jesus Christ on His judgement seat.

Following this the Holy Spirit will work with and in us to produce the very character of God within us. [**Galatians 5:22-25**]

Please download and study the many articles on the work of the Holy Spirit on this website to help you to prepare for your future opportunity in God’s Kingdom, His created family.

Where will Jesus Christ be on His return?

Zechariah 14:1-4 [NIV] *“A day of the LORD is coming when your plunder will be divided among you. I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight against it; the city will be captured, the houses ransacked, and the women raped. Half of the city will go into exile, but the rest of the people will not be taken from the city. Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights in the day of battle. On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south.”*

The “*day of the Lord*” refers to the return of Jesus Christ to this earth as our Lord to rule all nations, bringing about peace and harmony.

This is where the future of all Christians will start.

What God has prepared for His created family in the distant eternal future has yet to be revealed. [Isaiah 64:4; 1 Corinthians 2:9-10]

John 14:4-6 [NIV] *“‘You know the way to the place where I am going.’ Thomas said to him, ‘Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?’ Jesus answered, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me.’”*

This is one of the most important statements made by Jesus Christ.

Jesus is telling us that the only way into the Father’s presence is through Him.

Jesus is telling us that the only truth is found in His words and promises.

Jesus is telling us that the only way to eternal life is to accept Him as our Saviour.

This concept of way, truth and life was not new to the Jews for it is expounded within the Old Testament.

The way – Deuteronomy 5:32-33; Deuteronomy 31:29; Isaiah 30:21; Isaiah 35:8; Psalms 27:11

The truth – Psalms 86:11; Psalms 26:3; Psalms 119:30

Life – Proverbs 6:23; Proverbs 10:17; Psalms 16:11; Deuteronomy 30:19; Jeremiah 21:8; Proverbs 14:27; Proverbs 15:24; Proverbs 21:21

John 14:7-11 [NIV] *“‘If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.’ Philip said, ‘Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.’ Jesus answered: ‘Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, “Show us the Father”? Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves.’”*

Jesus is the visible, tangible image of the invisible God, He is the complete revelation of what God is like. The search for God ends with Jesus Christ. [Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:1-4]

When we see Jesus we can see some wonderful things about the invisible God.

1) God entered into an ordinary home and family – Anyone in the ancient world would have thought that if God did come to this earth, He would come and live as a king not an ordinary working man.

2) God is not ashamed to do the work of an ordinary man – Jesus was a carpenter/builder of Nazareth, earning a wage to support His widowed mother and family.

God understands our day’s work and the difficulty of making ends meet.

God knows the difficulty of ill-mannered customers and those who are reluctant to pay for work done.

God knows what it is like in an ordinary home with a big family.

3) God knows what it is like to be tempted – The life that Jesus lived was one of struggles and tensions. [Hebrews 4:15; Matthew 4:1-10; Luke 4:1-13]

Luke ends his account mentioning that Satan had not given up but was waiting for further opportune situations. [Matthew 16:21-23; Luke 22:31; John 13:27] Satan and his temptations was never far from Jesus during His life.

4) In Jesus we see God's Love for human beings – Jesus was not detached from human pain and suffering, physical but also mental pain. Many times we read of Jesus being filled with compassion for those who were unloved and suffering.

5) In Jesus we see God upon the cross – There is nothing quite so incredible as this in the world.

No human mind could ever have considered or dreamed that God would choose in Jesus Christ the cross to bring about our victory over death delivering human sin.

Yet this proves just how great God's love is for all humanity.