

Sent: Thursday, April 16, 2015 1:03 AM  
Subject: Late Nite's Mob Study

With our lesson last nite on John 13:1-20, we saw a dramatic shift in the focus of Jesus's ministry as He realizes that the "time has now come for the Son of Man to be glorified." He would be "leaving the world," while the disciples would be "living in the world!" And so John records how Jesus was preparing His disciples for "coping with life" without His presence! Chapters 13-17 are sometimes referred to as the "farewell discourse." As Kostenberger notes, these parting instructions to His followers (and that would include us!) are found only in John's gospel!

It starts with the "foot washing" incident which we discussed last nite. This is commonly seen as a lesson in humility and servant-hood, which it certainly is! But when seen in the context of what else took place in that "upper room,"--as we compare the various accounts in the four gospels--the lesson implications and applications rise to a new level! It was during this time that Jesus instituted the "Lord's Supper," offering the cup as a symbol of His blood that would be poured out for the sin of the world, and the bread as a symbol of His body which would be broken for us--none of which was covered in John's account! And, ironically, it was during this time, according to Luke, when the disciples were arguing with each other about who was the greatest! And it well might have been this that incited Jesus to "get up" from the supper table to initiate the foot washing! An object lesson was desperately needed! And action spoke better than words!

The foot washing incident is, in retrospect, a "foreshadowing" of Jesus's redemptive work on the cross itself! I just happened to read an old sermon by Ray Stedman, where he very picturesquely expressed this idea! And Kostenberger also seems to have this in mind when he notes that the foot washing "becomes an acted parable of theological significance of the incarnation itself!)

When Jesus "got up" from His place at the supper table, He was, in effect, picturing "leaving His throne" in Heaven to come into our world--in accordance with the will of His Father! "Laying aside His garment" pictures "laying aside His glory and becoming a man!" "Girding Himself with a towel" exemplifies "taking the form of a servant and humbling Himself and becoming obedient unto death!" And "pouring water into a basin" symbolizes "pouring out His blood" to provide cleansing from sin!

But there's more! Washing the feet of the disciples pictures the very act of applying cleansing to human lives! And when He completed the washing, John writes, He "resumed His place at the table"--or as the writer of Hebrews records: "When He had made purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high!" (Heb. 1:3)

All of this! Not just the "why we need to follow the example of Jesus" part in regard to "humble service"--but the beautiful picture of the redemptive story is also reflected, even more explicitly, by the Apostle Paul in Philippians 2, which seems to take on new meaning, as we read it in context with the foot washing--and the crucifixion! Here it is in the original King James translation, where I first learned it!

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father!"

Scott Trammell, drawing on Kostenberger, challenged us to go forth this week with a by being more "perceptive and caring" in order to identify and better meet the needs of people who God places in our lives!"

Well. We'll be considering more of Jesus's "parting instructions" as we continue in our study of this great book, the Gospel of John--inspired by God!

Have a great week, men!

Lowell