

The Last Supper.

Mark 14:17-26.

Sunday morning, January 25, 2009.

- I. In the evening He came with the twelve. Vs. 17.
 - A. The events surrounding the arrival of the Lord and his disciples are only recorded by John in John 13:1-20
 - B. Apparently the Lord and His disciples all sat down and since none of the disciples thought to humble themselves to wash the others' feet, the Lord Himself arose and washed His disciples feet and taught them a lesson in humility.
 - C. Peter and John had made the preparations that day, and this included water and a basin to wash the feet of the guests as they came in; also towels were ready, but none of the disciples were ready to assume this humble task.
 - D. Following this lesson the Lord's heart became heavy says John in John 13:21, and He broke to them the news that one of them would betray Him.

- II. Assuredly, one of you who eats with Me will betray Me. Vs. 18.
 - A. This announcement came to the disciples as a thunderbolt from a clear blue sky. They had not expected this at all. They were aware of the Lord's enemies on the part of the Jewish leaders, but not from their own ranks.
 - B. This announcement evoked three kinds of responses:
 1. First there were the questions of self examination of the eleven disciples; questions of a wholesome distrust of oneself. One by one they said "Is it I?" We might render the sense of the question as "Surely not I, is it?" It is the kind of question that hopes to receive a negative answer; a kind of question that is raised because one is not sure of oneself. How sure are you of what lives inside your heart? What comes out of your heart in times of testing and trial? Would David have judged himself capable of adultery and murder prior to meeting Bathsheba? Psalm 139:23 "Search me o God and know my heart..." Matt. 6:13 "And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." (who would lead us into temptation and sift us as wheat. Luke 22:31.)
 2. Secondly there is the question of hypocrisy and evasion on the part of Judas. Perhaps he was the only one left who had not raised the question "Is it I?" So as to avert suspicion away from himself he too ventures out and raises the question, "Surely not I, is it Rabbi?" To this the Lord gives a veiled affirmation, letting Judas know that He knew it was him without telling the others out rightly so.
 3. Thirdly there was the question coming out of a childlike drawing near to the heart of the Savior on the part of John, prompted by Peter, "Lord, who is it?" To this the Lord replied: "It is He to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it." Having dipped it He gave it to Judas. Upon receiving the bread and eating it, Satan enters into the heart of Judas; Judas goes out, he leaves, and it was night. John 13:27,30. Here is an example of one who ate judgment unto himself. Be sober and

serious about how you receive the Lord's supper.

III. Why did the Lord raise the issue during what would otherwise have been a joyous celebration?

- A. It is a warning to Judas; even at this late hour it is not too late for Judas to turn back and return the thirty pieces of silver. If Judas further hardens his heart and proceeds, it is not without the warning that it would have been better for that man never to have been born. Mark 14:21.
- B. It reveals to us the depths of Christ's sufferings. It was a humiliating and treacherous way for the Lord to be handed over to His enemies. A man to whom the Lord had shown and taught and done so much good, now is going to betray Him with a kiss.
- C. It shows that even now the Lord is in full control, and fully aware of the whole situation. He could have fled Jerusalem; He could have asked for the twelve legions of angels, but then, how would the Scriptures be fulfilled?
- D. It furnished an opportunity for humble self-examination. We know ourselves so very little. Consider in light of this how at the end of the supper, as they were going to the garden of Gethsemane, when the Lord told them that they all would be made to stumble because of Him, they all denied it, and Peter vehemently so.

IV. The heart of the ordinance.

- A. Why do we need the Lord's supper besides the teaching and preaching of the Bible? Because the supper speaks to us about our need to meet and fellowship with the Lord Jesus Himself.
- B. In the Scriptures we learn all kinds of things about our heavenly Father, and about the Lord Jesus Christ. But in the supper we were meant to meet Him personally, and we were meant to be joined to Him spiritually.
- C. Like Job we can say "I have heard of you by the hearing of the ear, (in the teaching and preaching of the word) but now my eye sees You (in the supper). Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes. Job 42:5,6.
- D. Consider the bread; the body of Christ.
 - 1. It suffered; was broken; died and was buried.
 - 2. But the same body was raised; was glorified, and was exalted on high.
 - 3. To this body we were joined; members of His flesh and of His bones. Eph. 5:30. It is the living glorified Christ Himself who we were meant to meet in communion.
- E. Consider the cup; the blood of Christ shed for many.
 - 1. Here is the ground on which communion is possible. God is reconciled to sinners by the blood of His Son, shed for sinners.
 - 2. The bread than speaks to us of the reality of meeting and communing and abiding with the Lord Himself; and the cup speaks to us about the ground on which that is possible.
- F. Seek the Lord Himself.
He alone can satisfy the longing soul; He alone can order the soul aright.