

The Disclosure of His Love

Lord's Table Meditations

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Turn to the book of the Gospel of John 14. We're going to read verses 22 through 31 and we are going to have to dip into a little bit into the previous verses to get the context. But Judas, that is not Iscariot, now if you'll recall, he has already left this group, this Judas is who we commonly know as Jude, the brother of James. Judas is also going to ask him a question about some comments that he had made in answer to Philip. So this is an ongoing conversation that our Lord is having between he himself and some individuals of those disciples, and also his instruction of the whole group. So John 14:22.

22 Judas said unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? 23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. 24 He that loves me not keeps not my sayings: and the word which you hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me. 25 These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. 26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost [or the Holy Spirit], whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. 27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world gives, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. 28 You have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If you loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I. 29 And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, you might believe. 30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world comes, and has nothing in me. 31 But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.

We've been using this Upper Room Discourse and just after this message we are actually going to leave the Upper Room in preparation for our Lord's table. He instituted this at the beginning of this Discourse, didn't he, and he shared this with his disciples. So it is only appropriate that you and I in the partaking of this table would not only remember his death, his burial, his resurrection, the shedding of his blood, but that we would actually

remember the words that he gave and, of course, we know now how much of those words were fulfilled. All of them. What a blessing that is for us to look back. He told them these things before it came to pass so that it would build their, what? It would build their faith and we can look back and see that happening and it, too, builds our faith. It establishes us in the things of Christ.

Now as we go back to chapter 13 just to kind of remember and set the stage here of what is going on, our Lord had come to that full understanding in his humanity, both his origin and his position with God the Father. Verse 3 says, "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God," the result of that knowledge was the humbling of himself to wash the disciples' feet. Of course, if you or I had come to that determination in our carnality that all authority has been given unto us and everything had been given into our hands, we would not in our flesh humble ourselves to wash the disciples' feet, we would have instructed the disciples on who we are and that they are to do, what? They are to wash my feet. They are to sit at my feet. And wouldn't it be a loving thing for me just to allow them in my presence? That's the way those who are in Adam think but that is not the way our Lord thinks. He uses his authority. He uses his possession of all things as an occasion to serve others, to serve the creatures, we could word it that way.

What an amazing amazing person our Lord is and, brethren, having seen that, no matter what our station of life is, no matter what our maturity is, the more knowledge that you have of his word is not so that you can be the corrector of everybody, although correction will be necessary and needed, it is so that you can use that knowledge to serve other people with that knowledge because not everybody has the knowledge of Christ, right? Our position in him is given to us to humble us, to serve one another, to serve the one who has not that knowledge, to serve the one because of the lack of transformative knowledge in their life, they sin, they make mistakes, they make unwise choices, and yet just like Peter did, did he ever make unwise statements? Like all the time, right? And yet here he is, the spokesman for the 11. Here he is, our Lord serving and washing his feet. Even in light of the fact that our Lord knew that he was going to do what three times? Deny him. He prayed for him. He didn't say, "Well, Peter, you ought to have known better." He prayed for him. Did he warn him? He did warn him. Did Peter heed? No, he did not heed. He got so focused on the circumstances of life that he forgot the words of Christ, and so do we, don't we, get distressed by the things of life and we forget what he has said.

Our Lord humbles himself and in the midst of that in that Upper Room after that washing of the disciples' feet, he is troubled and disturbed because of the betrayer who is among them. He, too, had had his feet washed but he was not clean. And brethren, this is how we know that the mere washing of physical water, whether it be by foot washing or by the waters of physical baptism, that does not cleanse a person, does it? If it did, Judas would have been cleansed. No, it's the washing of the water by the words of Christ that cleans us.

So he is distressed. He is troubled. That shaking and disturbance of heart could be literally felt by our Lord and seen by those men and he says to them, "One of you shall betray me." That would upset a dinner, wouldn't it? "Who is this man? It is not I, is it? It is not I?" Of course, Judas was so deceitful nobody is pointing their finger at him, right? Nobody is pointing their finger at Peter. Nobody is pointing their finger at Jude or Philip or any of them that are there. They are all saying, what? "Is it me, O Lord? Is it I?" Finally we know from other passages Judas, lastly, asked the Lord, "Is it I?" And he takes the sop and he hands it to him and says, "Go and do." It was him, wasn't it? And even then, the disciples were not aware. They just thought that he was leaving to go buy something for the meal or to take care of some matter of the poor that needed funds.

But he leaves and Jesus gets right to the point, he says, "I'm going to leave you." Brethren, it would be disturbing enough to know that there was a betrayer among us, wouldn't it, but now their upsetness about that has been totally displaced by the fact that the one they love, the one they follow, is leaving. He's going to leave for a little while and then they will see him again. Of course, they had no understanding of what that meant, right? In fact, he's going to pick it back up, if you go over to the other chapters, if you go over to chapter 16 toward the end of that, he's going to pick that up again in verse 16 where he makes the same statement. He makes the same statement in verse 17, some of the disciples started wondering, "What is this that he says, A little while, and you shall not see me: a little while, and you shall see me because I go to my Father." I mean, they had no comprehension of what really was happening here, though our Lord had warned them many many times that he was going to go to Jerusalem, he was going to suffer, he was going to be turned over to the chief priests, and he was going to, what? He was going to die. But they wouldn't hear that. They were too busy arguing about who is the greatest in the kingdom. I mean, these people are a real mess, aren't they? Kind of like you and me. Oh yes, we have more understanding perhaps than the apostles did at that very same moment, but we so often forget these things and we don't understand what our Lord is saying and how he is working.

So Peter chimes in, "I'll never leave you. I'll even do," what? "I'll die for you." And our Lord turns to him and addresses him individually and basically questions the depth of Peter's love. "Would you really give your life for me?" "Yes, I will!" "Peter, before the night is over when the cock crows, you're going to deny me not once," that would be bad enough, wouldn't it? "Not twice," that would be horrific. "But three times." How would you feel if our Lord said that to you? I think Peter said in his heart, "I hear what you're saying but not me."

Our Lord tells them in John 14:1, "Don't let your heart be troubled. You are so unsettled or intimidated by the circumstances that I am telling you, believe in God and believe also in me. I'm going somewhere to prepare a place for you. I'm going somewhere to prepare so that you might come where I am." So what's the natural question? "A little while I'm going to be away, then a little while and you're going to see me again. I'm going away from you. In my Father's house are many places for weary pilgrims." So what's the natural question? Where are you, what? Where are you going? And our Lord says to Thomas, verse 6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes onto the Father, but

by me." Where is he going? He is going to the Father and they are to go to the Father, too. Amen? But he's going to the Father.

Of course, the obvious question after our Lord says, "Now look, Thomas," verse 7, "you do know me and you are continuing to know me and you should know my Father because of that also, and from henceforth you are going to know more of the Father and you have actually seen," who? "You have seen the Father." Now, if you or I were there, we would ask very naturally. I mean, you are looking at a man, aren't you? You're looking at someone who is the Son of man. You're looking at someone who has always addressed God as his Father, which means he is the Son of God. So the natural thing would be what? "Do you know what, I've not seen the Father and all I'm seeing right now is, who? Is you." Philip says, "Show us the Father. It would be enough." And the answer to that question is, what? "Philip, if you've seen me, you've seen," who? "The Father." And we're going to look at that this afternoon in our afternoon services but, brethren, I think we lose the shock of this. Jesus is declaring that God and the glory of God and the knowledge of God is sitting there right in front of them and to behold him, Jesus, the Son of God, the Messiah, is to behold God the Father. There is a mystery there, isn't there?

So he kind of says it, I think, with a note of sadness. Verse 9, "Have I been so long time with you, and have you not known me, Philip?" And I think sometimes we make the same mistake. We think of Jesus in his teachings more than in who he is in his person, right? Now, his teachings are of God because they are of the Father, but grace and truth, he says, "To see me is to see the Father." Amazing. Astonishing.

And he tells them that he is going to go away and that his union with the Father is going to be expressed in a union with them through the third member of the Godhead who is the Holy Spirit. So he states, verse 16, "I will pray the Father and he will give you another Comforter that he might abide with you forever." Amazing. Here's a man requesting God the Father to send the third member of the Godhead to a human being and God the Father will, what? He will do it.

Well, who is this one? Who is this Comforter, verse 17? Well, it has to do something with "the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive. It has no ability to receive it because it does not see him nor do they know him, but they are knowing him, for he dwells with them in," who? "The Son of God." And he will be, what? "In them sometime in the future. He will not leave us comfortless," verse 18. He will not leave us without relationship. He will not leave us as orphans but he will maintain that union which is being kept now by his physical presence, he will maintain that union through the spiritual presence of the Holy Spirit. And he says again, verse 19, "Yet a little while, and the world sees me no more; but you see me: because I live, you shall live also. And at that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you." In other words, this time is going to be in the future and what will happen at that future moment is you will receive the fullness of his Holy Spirit in the new covenant sense of that fullness, and at that point you will know that we are one; that Christ is in us and we are in Christ, and yet we will know something else, we will know that the Son of God is on that throne.

Look at verse 20 again, "At that day you shall know that I am in my Father," and if you don't have a note here, I bracketed the three words "at that day," you might want to put a little reference to Acts 2:33. This day was the day of Pentecost. Because they remember that Jesus was going to pray to the Father for him to send the Holy Spirit to those men, to that early church, when did that happen? Acts 2, and when that occurred, those men walked out of that Upper Room knowing Christ was in them, they were in Christ, and that Christ Jesus, their Lord, was in the Father, and the Father was in him. It was a confirmatory absolute assurance that what he had told them was so, and he granted them through the Spirit of Jesus that boldness to stand up. Peter is no longer denying, is he? He's lifting up his voice and proclaiming.

Now, he concludes in verse 21 what is probably one of the most revolutionary statements that our Lord could say, "He that has my commandments, and keeps them, he it is that loves me: and he that loves me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." Now Jude or Judas is going to pick up on that word "manifest." What is he saying here? Well, he is saying to those men and to us, that there is something that is going to go on as a result of his ascension to the throne of grace; that what is going to go on here is something spiritual. This is how he's going to answer Jude or Judas, and that is the manifestation of his love to his people through the knowledge of himself through the words of Christ, that this is how he's going to love us. Is he going away? He is going away. Well, how is he going to preserve us? Through the Spirit of truth. How is he going to love us? He's going to love us by showing to us himself, who he is, not just what he teaches but what he has declared about who he is.

And here's how it works if you can just imagine a little circle, and I want to remind you, who is he speaking to? He is speaking to his people, the disciples, the saints, to justified people. He is saying this is how it works, verse 21. You are given commandments, or we could even broaden that, you have been given things to do that he has commanded you to do, and you have been given things that he declares about himself. Having given those words to us, we possess them. Amen? Just like you have a Bible, it's not holding your Bible, it's not me holding my Bible is not me possessing the commandments. Me hearing that Bible and bringing it and grafting it into my soul, that's possessing the commandments. In possessing those commandments, now what do I do with those commandments? I am to, what? Obey them and I am to obey them out of a heart of love. It is a loving obedience. And remember, the great commandment is to do what to the Lord your God? To love him. I obey that engrafted word in my life out of love to him.

So when I have those commandments, look at verse 21 again, and I keep them, that lets other people know something. It lets other people know that I, what? That I love Jesus. Young people, anybody can say you love Jesus but it's not the saying of my lips, it's the actions of my heart. A child can say to a parent, "I love you," but if they walk in disobedience, do they love you? No parent would say, "Oh, my child loves me to death but he never obeys me. He's a horror in the house. Never cleans up his room. Never wants to spend time with me. Never listens to what I say. Never converses with me. Never just wants to be around me." We don't look and then say, "Well, how do I know that they love me? Well, they told me. They tell me every night before they go to bed. I

say I love you, Sam. Sam says, I love you, mom and dad." Now, that's not to minimize verbal communication but verbal communication has to be backed up by, what? My walk.

So, brethren, when people hear the word of God, it's not just hearing it and it's not just merely, as it were, engrafting it or memorizing it so that you can quote it. It's hearing it and obeying it. It's letting the words of Christ abide in you. Those people who hear the word of God and do the word of God, those are the people who do what to Jesus? They love him. And of course, he's going to repeat that. Let's just dip into the answer to Judas, verse 23, "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that does not love me does not keep my words." Does everybody hear that? "And the word that I'm telling you right now is not merely mine, it's the Father's that sent me." This is God telling us this. So when Adam partook of that fruit of the tree that God told him not to partake of it, was he loving God? No. It was not an expression of love, it was an expression of hate and rebellion.

So here's the circle, right? You have God's commandments, you do, what? You obey them. In what manner? Out of a heart of love. And when that happens, look at verse 21 again, your loving Jesus will bring you into a position where you will be loved of God the Father. "He that has my commandments and keeps them, he it is that loves me: and he that loves me shall be loved of my Father." So God will love you. Hallelujah. And not only will God love you, but what is our response to his love to us in showing us who he is and our engrafting this and our obeying it shows that we are loving him back. He loves us by showing us that. We love him back by walking in obedience to what he has disclosed unto us. And when we do that, the Father notices that we love the Son and the Father will love us and who will love us again? The Son of God will love us again. And what will he do? He will manifest himself to you. Now, here's the truth that is so revolutionary: that the supreme way that God the Son loves his people is by disclosing to them who he is through his words. The greatest expression that God the Father could do for a church is to give them a man of God who will give them the words of God so that they can embrace those words and walk in the light of those words in a loving way, so that God the Father and God the Son will see their love for them and they will love them again, as it were, and show them more of the Son of God and who is. And I love what it says here, the word "manifest" means "to declare plainly to them who he is." And it is the manifestation, look at verse 21 again, "I will love him, and will manifest," who to them? "Himself, the Son of God, to them." And that shouldn't bother you because to have him manifested to you is to have God the Father manifested to you, right, because to see him is to see the Father.

So, brethren, how does God love us? Well, he wants to love us and he does love us by showing us more of who he is. So let's ask this question: do you know more of him today than a year ago? Than two years ago? Well, if the answer to that is yes, then in your heart you ought to express loving gratitude because he is loving you right now, right? And our response to that disclosure of himself is more obedience, more maturity, more disclosure. We sing, right, at our Lord's tables that we are going to do in just a few moments, we

sing, "More love to thee, O Christ." How is it going to come? Through your loving obedience to what you already know of him.

Now, that leads to a very natural question that Judas is going to ask. Now, you wouldn't ask this question because you're not expecting a physical kingdom, right? That is yet future but what are those men expecting? What do they know from their Old Testament? That when the Messiah comes, he's going to do, what? He's going to set up a kingdom and he's going to be King and, you know, he promised them that they were going to be the vice regents, as it were. When ordered to set up a kingdom and to have that type of structure going on, brethren, you can't just manifest yourself to 11 men and no more. If I set up a kingdom, who's going to know about that? Everybody is going to know about that on this globe.

So he asks them, verse 22, "how is this that you are going to manifest yourself unto us, but not unto," who? "The whole world." How is this going to happen? And brethren, the answer is given in two ways. 1. By his word. He's going to declare himself unto us, that is his disciples, by his words, the things that he has said. Look at what it says. Look at verse 23, "If a man love me, he will keep my," what? "My words." Look at 24, "He that loves me not doesn't keep my words and the words which you are hearing right now are not mine, but the Father that has sent me." Verse 25, "These things I have spoken unto you." Verse 26, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, who the Father will send in my name, he's going to teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance." Well, how do you teach? Through words. What do you remember? Words. This is how he's going to manifest himself to his people who love him by knowing about him, engrafting them into their hearts and lives, being transformed by that word, and walking in loving obedience to the words that he himself has said. He's going to do it through words, the things that he has said. And he's going to say it again in John 17, "Sanctify them through thy truth. Your word is truth."

So brethren, let's just pause here and ask ourselves this question: do you want to be loved? Yes or no? Everybody wants to be loved, amen? Well, there is the King of kings and Lord of lords, the "I AM," the one who is prior to the beginning of all things, the one who spoke all things into existence, the one who is given to all people, lost and saved, the breath of life, and the one who has given to his people his own Spirit, this one who is not here physically, is he? He's seated on the throne of grace. He's going to love you through what he said.

So if you want to be loved, if you want to be loved, open his voice. Is everybody with me? I don't understand people who say, "I want to be loved," but they won't open the words of love. This is why it's so important that we have our devotional time with the Lord. This is how he loves us. This is why it's so important – hear me now – that you meditate on him day and night. What are you meditating on? What he said. Don't you want to be loved through the day? This is why it's important that when you rest, you pray, "Lord, let my heart meditate on you while I rest," so that you can know his love while you rest. This isn't, "I love you," and, "Okay, I've got to pump myself up and kind of feel this love." When he discloses who he is in the pages of your word, of the word of Christ,

you are knowing his love and I will assure you, you will feel it. The illumination of those words will give you joy unspeakable and full of glory. That's love. It's like in some small insignificant way of a bride when the door is opened and she sees her bridegroom at the end of that aisle, right? It's that same joy. That same love. Don't you want to be loved?

Brethren, we are going to come to this table, right? You want to know he loves you, amen? You're going to remember him. How are you going to remember him? Well, you're not going to receive his love or grace through these elements, you're going to receive his love and his grace through what he said, "Do this in remembrance of me." How are you going to remember him? Well, the only way we know him is through what he has said. And it is to that person that the Father and the Son will come near to them. This is how we draw near to the Lord. We draw near to the Lord as we open the pages of this book. This is the mirror by which we see the reflection of the glory of God in the face of Christ. This is where we hear him and we see him not with our physical eyes but with the eyes of our understanding. This is when he becomes sharper and clearer and the clarity of who he is becomes much more in focus, and as he becomes more and more in focus, our steps are more likely to walk in his pathways, and the less likely we are of being deceived.

This is how the Father and the Son come near. He says this, verse 23, "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him." He has already said that in verse 21, "and we will come near to him and make our," what? "Abode with them." Now, here is the fascinating thing: the word "abode" in our King James Bible is the same word translated "mansions." He's going to come and make their place with them and, brethren, he's going to do that, look down at verse 26, through two ways. He's going to do it to those disciples, to those apostles, to those men by inspiration. Verse 26, "the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he's going to teach you," his direct audience is those apostles, "and bring all things to their remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." And what are those apostles going to do with those words that are brought to their remembrance? There going to do, what? What are they going to do with those words? They're going to write them down, amen? Yes, they're going to obey them. Yes, they are going to love Christ by walking in that. But what they are going to do is they are going to write them down and in John 16, he's going to revisit this idea of them writing down what the Holy Spirit is going to guide them into all truth. What a blessing that is.

Brethren, there is a secondary application underneath that and that is for all of his disciples. Now, he's not going to give you words to write down in the sense of inspiration, but what is he going to do? He's going to take the words that those apostles wrote down and he's going to illumine them to you so that you might know him. That's eternal life, to know him, Christ. This is how he loves you, by opening up the words unto you. My only regret in life is that I have not used the means to have more of his love shine in my life, for one day I will walk in the fullness of that love forever. Hallelujah for that.

Brethren, this is exactly what Peter said. You know, Peter was here wasn't he? When he says in 2 Peter 1:3 and 4, "according as his divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness through the knowledge of him." There it is. And to gain that, he has given you exceeding great and precious promises.

Now brethren, that is it. So what is the gathering of his people on the Lord's day? Why would they want to be in church? Why would they want to be in God's house? Love. If there's a place on this earth that true love ought to be declared and exhibited through the pages of the Bible, it ought to be his church. That's why we come. It's not to mark it off a list, it's because we love him and we love his love and we love to reflect that love to him, and we love the more declaration of him. I hope you're not satisfied with what you know of him. We know so little. And because of that love, secondly, we will have that manifestation come to us and the result of that will be verse 27, that would be, the presence of his peace. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world gives, give I unto you. Don't let your heart be," what? That's how he started the chapter.

Brethren, please hear me: when you know the Lord, the knowledge of the Lord and the walking in the light of that knowledge stabilizes us. The world is going to hell. There are disturbing things out there. I almost hate to read the newspaper. It's just one bit of news seeking to shake me at every column. But to know him, to have his love come to me and to you through his words, will result in a measure of peace that you have never known. That doesn't mean that the waves still aren't roaring and the storm is still not thundering and the lightning still isn't lightning and the disturbing earthquakes still aren't out there, right? But your soul is on a Rock. It doesn't mean that you won't feel anxiety. I think that's a common mistake about believers. I had the occasion to remind one of our members of that last week when they said to me, "Well, you know, the Bible says be careful for nothing, don't be anxious about anything, but by prayer and supplication, and I've been praying but I still am defeated. I'm still anxious." Oh, the anxiety can be all around you but the Spirit of God is like a Rock.

"My peace I give to you." You know, the only peace that the world can give to you is the peace of a big bank account, the peace of having all these false securities, the peace of people's friendships which are so fickle, the peace of having your circumstances, everything go your way. That is so fleeting, isn't it? That's not the peace that the Lord gives. Did you hear that? It's not the peace of all your circumstances going straight. Did you hear that? It's not the peace of you having enough money. It's the peace that comes through what he has said because you know he has loved you and you are his and he is yours.

Brethren, this is the peace that is in the middle of all anxiety and he has told them this ahead of time, so when they see all this happen, the cross, the soldiers, the betrayal, that they would remember. Now let me ask you this question before we go to our table: did they remember? You'll recall that when the women came and told the disciples, the apostles, that Jesus was alive, they didn't believe it and they went running. Peter and John

went running to the tomb and who got there first? John, he was the exerciser so he got there first. Then the Bible says, "Then they remembered."

So brethren, we have an opportunity once every month on a Lord's day to deliberately put our place in remembering. Let's remember at this table when we partake of this bread and we partake of this cup, let's remember what he says. Let's think about him. Let's let him love us more by you wrestling with truth about him that maybe puzzles you a little bit but there is something there. He wants to love you and may we receive that love today.