

Series: John

Title: Loved to the End

Text: John 13: 1

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From the end of John 12 forward, the Lord only ministered among his disciples who he had called. Even after he permits himself to be arrested, he continues to minister to those he called. So from John 13: 1 through the next chapters we find our Lord, no more preaching publicly, but ministering to his people. We see our Lord's love and grace and tenderness shine so greatly here. He speaks to them with such simplicity and there is such a depth to the things he teaches us. We see God's heart toward his people.

Today, we will look at John 13: 1 in three parts—1) **John 13: 1: Now before the feast of the passover,** 2) **when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father,** 3) **having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.**

BEFORE THE FEAST OF THE PASSOVER

John 13: 1: Now before the feast of the passover...

The feast of passover was instituted by God to remind the children of Israel—to keep them in remembrance—that it was God who redeemed Israel out of Egyptian bondage.

The *great day* of the feast was the day of atonement. It was when the paschal lamb was slain in place of the children of Israel. A spotless lamb was brought typifying Christ. The high priest laid his hands on the head of the lamb picturing the sins of the children of Israel transferred to the lamb. Then the lamb was slain in place of, instead of, the people. Another lamb had their sin transferred to it in type. Then it was led away into a place not inhabited by a fit man. These two lambs typified Christ. The fit man typified Christ. Christ alone is the spotless Lamb of God. He bore the sin of God's spiritual Israel. He died in place of his people. He took our sins away unto a land not inhabited.

Then the high priest entered the holiest of holies alone with the blood of the lamb and sprinkled the blood upon the mercy-seat. Christ is the true High Priest who entered into God's presence—the true holy place. Christ is the Mercy Seat of his people. By Christ's blood atonement has been made and God receives his people through faith in Christ.

Christ is the Passover Lamb who gave himself for his people. He fulfilled the type. He gave us the Lord's Table to remember him by. The bread is symbolic of his broken body broken for his people. The wine is symbolical of his blood shed for his people—his life for our life. We do not observe the passover. Christ is our Passover sacrificed for us.

So this being "*before the feast of the passover*" tells us this was shortly before our Lord was to go to the cross and accomplish this work for his people.

WHEN JESUS KNEW THAT HIS HOUR HAD COME

John 13: 1: Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father

Our Lord Jesus lived his life anticipating this hour. At this time, "*he knew his hour had come.*" Until this hour came—he had protection because his hour had not yet come (Jn 7:30; Jn 8:20). But now, the Lord Jesus knew that his hour had come.

Our Lord knew the shame and suffering involved in this hour—and he willingly took it upon himself. He knew the terror, the agony, the shame of the cross. Christ knew the treatment he would bear at the hand of men. He knew the shame of the sins of his people that would be laid on him. On his mind was the fact that the justice of God would be poured out on him in place of his people and the Father would forsake him. He had begun to experience the soul trouble that accompanied it all.

Also, our Substitute also knew the *necessity* laid upon Him by God the Father. He said, ‘I *must* be lifted up!’ It was the only way the righteousness of God could be manifest—the Just dying in the room and stead of the unjust. It was the only way our sin could be put away forever. The cross was the only way we could be made the righteousness of God. It was the only way God could get all the glory for saving us from our sins. So nothing could turn the Faithful One from the work he came to accomplish.

Isaiah 50: 5: The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. 6: I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. 7: For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. 8: *He is* near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? let us stand together: who *is* mine adversary? let him come near to me. 9: Behold, the Lord GOD will help me; who *is* he *that* shall condemn me? lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up.

And remember, the Spirit of God gave John these words. Rather than drawing our focus to the shame and suffering, he draws us to that joy that was set before him—*“when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father.”* He knew he would depart out of this world of sin into that holy habitation that had been his from eternity. The Lord Jesus knew he would be with the Father with whom he had been since before the world was. He knew he would sit down at God’s right hand, his work being accomplished. And he knew he would not depart alone—mystically, spiritually all his people for whom he laid down his life would arise in him and sit down in him—fully, eternally redeemed from the curse of the law by his precious blood. This was the joy that was set before him for which he set his face like a flint. He endured the cross, despising the shame, “for the joy that was set before him” (Heb 12: 2).

But as our Lord had all this on his heart, our Lord also knew that those he loved would yet be in this world. So his people were on his heart. *“when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father...”*

HAVING LOVED HIS OWN WHICH WERE IN THE WORLD

John 13: 1: Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

We see Christ’s humanity here. He is truly bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. We know the emotions we experience when we have to depart from ones we love. Who can describe that ache in the heart? Tenderness becomes more tender. Our embrace becomes stronger and longer. We value every second. From the depth of our heart, we try to find the words to express the love in our heart to that one from whom we are departing. Our Savior knew and experienced all those same emotions. He had that same longing and felt that same ache toward those he loves.

Also, we see the Lord’s perfect love as the GodMan, as our Head. He knew what he faced. We heard him speak of his soul being troubled. Yet, with all this crushing weight upon him—experiencing all the same emotions we experience—for the sake of these few disciples that he loved and for the sake of his disciples here today, and in every age—he focused not on self. His focus was on comforting and strengthening his people. He laid aside all his soul troubles, laid aside all of self and ministered to his troubled friends.

And being the faithful servant of God representing his people, he was perfecting faith and love for his people. So our Savior gave God the glory for this. In Isaiah, before speaking of setting his face like a flint to go to the cross, he said,

Isaiah 50: 4: The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to *him that is* weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.

None ever lived such perfect faith and love as our GodMan, Mediator. He is the Author and Finisher of faith and love by whom his people are perfected. *“Having loved his own, which were in the world, he loved them to the end.”*

Let's look at each of these words—"Having loved." From eternity before he created the world he loved his own. There was no cause in the objects of his love. When we came forth, there was every reason not to love us. It was not that we loved God but that he loved us. This word "having" is an assuring word. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. Immutable. Therefore "having" loved, he loves forever. That can only be said of God. In nothing about us or creation can it be said, "having" done it, it shall be forever. This earth "having" been, will one day be burned up. But Christ our God and Savior having loved, loves forever.

Notice the next word, "Having loved *his own*..." His love is particular. He loves his own. It includes those there that day, and it includes his elect in every age, his own today, even his own who are yet to be born. This is not the word used when it says "he came unto his own and his own received him not"—there it was his countrymen. Here it means "his own" by divine electing free and sovereign grace—loved and chosen without a cause in us. Here it means his own by the gift of the Father to him—"I pray not for the world but for them thou hast given me." (Jn 17: 9) It is his own for whom he laid down his life—who he purchased with his own blood. He loves his own who he quickens and inseparably unites with him in Spirit through faith.

Then it says, "Having loved his own *which were in the world*." This is his own who had a fallen sin-nature like all the children of Adam. Having loved his own with our thimble of understanding and ocean of error. Having loved his own whose faith is often small and unbelief great. Having loved his own who follow him but are prone to wander. Having loved his own who serve him but whose service is so feeble. Having loved his own who would exalt themselves over each other, arguing who should be the greatest. Having loved his own who would deny knowing him and run and hide.

But get this "Having loved his own which were in the world, *he loved them unto the end*." Not only does his love know no change, the love of God in Christ is permanent and perpetual; it knows no end.

Jeremiah 31:3: The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, *saying*, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.

Isaiah 54:8: In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness [everlasting loving-kindness] will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer.

Some faithful commentators read these last words, '*He loved them unto the uttermost*'—expressing the depth and degree of his love. He loved us to the uttermost by suffering the hell we deserved on the cross. Christ loved us to the uttermost by sending the gospel and calling us giving us faith to believe on him. His loving hand rescued us from the depths to which we fell and raised us to the height of his eternal throne. Now from his throne in glory—to the end of our greatest, deepest need—in the greatest depth and degree of love—he loves us. He shall continue loving us to the end of time till we are with him in glory forevermore and he won't lose one! Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever. There is no shadow of turning with him. He loves his own with an everlasting love.

Hebrews 7:25: Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

A dying father loves his own children, and knowing the tribulations they will face without him, he tries to comfort them with his last words. Our Lord knew his hour had come that he would depart out of the world to the Father. He knew the scripture must be fulfilled—"smite the Shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered." The Lord knew he would no more be in the world in body but his people in every age would be in the world. And "*having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them to the end*."

Yet, Christ does not *try* to comfort, he effectually comforts his children. He comforts us with the assurance that though he is departed in body yet he shall never leave us nor forsake us. The Lord Jesus is ever with us in the power of the Holy Spirit and we are ever there seated with him in glory. This is what he made them know and continues to make us know. "*Having loved his own which were in the world, he loves us to the end*." Paul said, "nothing shall separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus."

He makes us behold his love more according to our need. The darker the night, the greater the star shines. The deeper the valley, the swifter the stream runs. The more enemies and fears increase, the more evident

our Lord's presence all around us. The weaker we are, the more evident he alone is our Strength. The more changes we experience in this ever-changing world, the more we behold that his is the love that never changes, never ends, is always effectual, always saving. The more we are enabled to behold the length and breadth and depth and height of his love, the more we are filled with the fulness of God. Let us pray for one another as Paul did, asking the Father to make us know, to give us the Spirit and make us see his love more and more,

Ephesians 3: 17: That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, 18: May be able to comprehend with all saints what *is* the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19: And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

Amen!