

JESUS FINAL TEACHINGS TO HIS FOLLOWERS

The Upper Room Discourse (John chapters 13-17)

The events of the Upper Room happened the night before (Thursday) he was crucified (Friday). On Thursday night it was time for Jesus and His disciples to celebrate the Passover dinner. Jesus knew He had only hours left to live, so He wanted to put the time to good use. He had a Passover dinner with His disciples, instituted the Lord's Supper (i.e. communion), washed His disciples' feet, and provided extremely important final teachings. After the dinner event, Jesus and the disciples sang a hymn and went to the Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane (note: some of the details surrounding the Upper Room event are found in Matthew 26:17-30, Mark 14:12-26 and Luke 22:7-23).

Jesus covers a number of very important topics and teachings, such as love (love is mentioned 31 times in these chapters!), servanthood, Holy Spirit, unity, relationship with the world and so on.

JOHN CHAPTER 13

Verse 1: Jesus knew He had only a short time left, and wanted to show the full extent of His love.

Verses 2-17: Jesus washes His disciples feet, and provides an example and teaching regarding humility, selfless service and putting others first – traits He fully exemplified the next day when He allowed Himself to be crucified on the cross and have the penalty of the sins of you and I thrust upon Him.

By the foot washing, Jesus set for us an example of humble servanthood, and said we will be blessed if we act upon His teaching.

Application Question: How is my personal servanthood? What can I do to be a better servant?

Verses 18-30. Jesus predicts His betrayal by Judas Iscariot (note: Judas had become selfish, greedy and obsessed with material gain. For a striking contrast, refer to Mary of Bethany in John 12:1-8).

Application Question: What am I obsessed with – things of the world or the Lord?

Verses 31-35: Jesus tells His disciples He only has a little time left, and gives an extremely important special command – “love one another” as Jesus has loved us. Our primary identity as followers of Christ (true Christians) should be our love! We demonstrate our love to one another by obedience to God’s commands (see I John 5:2-3).

Application Question: How strong is my love for others? What can I do to strengthen my love?

Verses 36-38: Jesus predicts Peter’s denial.

Application Question: Am I ashamed of being identified as a follower of Jesus Christ? What can I do to better represent Jesus to others?