

# Daily Bible Study Commentary by Pastor Steve

We're excited to have you digging deeper into the Word. The best way to use this study guide is to read the Bible verse(s) first, then Pastor Steve's commentary. God bless you.

## John 13:9-11

**vs9-10:** Shocked and frightened, Peter then begged for a bath. He said, "Lord, not my feet only, but also the hands and the head" (literal), to which Jesus replied with a statement that opens to us the spiritual meaning behind the symbol of foot washing. He said, "The one who has bathed has no need to wash, except his feet, but is completely clean" (literal). He made a distinction between a person taking a bath and a person washing the dust off their feet and announced that His disciples, with the exception of Judas, were already clean because they had taken a bath. They didn't need another bath, but they would need to have their feet washed whenever they became dirty. **v11:** Even Jesus' distinction concerning Judas helps us understand the truth He was teaching that evening. He said, "Not all of you are clean." Clearly Judas had not partaken of the "bath," which must refer to the forgiveness of sins which comes through faith in Jesus. The "washing" then must refer to the ongoing cleansing which occurs when we repent and confess our sins after feeling the conviction of the Holy Spirit (1Jn 1:8-9).

## John 13:12-15

**vs12-15:** After He finished washing their feet, Jesus put His cloak back on and returned to His place at the table. Then He explained the meaning of what He had done. He began by asking them, "Do you know what I have done to you?" And without waiting for an answer, He said, "You call Me the Teacher and the Lord, and you speak correctly, for I am. Therefore, if I the Teacher and Lord washed your feet, you also ought (owe a debt) to wash one another's feet, for I gave you an example [to be copied], so that just as I did to you, you may also do" (literal). In other words, He washed their feet to teach them that ongoing sins needed to be cleansed, and they should help one another to do so and also to model the fact that humble service was neither beneath Him nor them.

## John 13:16

**v16:** If those qualities were not beneath their Teacher and Lord, they were certainly not beneath His disciples. And to show them that there were no lower limits on whom they might serve, He revealed how great a distance there was between Himself and them. He compared it to the distance between a master and a slave. He was the divine Son of God, while they were created beings who deserved God's judgment were it not for the fact that He would win mercy for them on the cross. So He said, "A slave is not greater [than] his master." If He, the Master, could serve them, the slaves, then they should never think of themselves as too good or too important to serve someone in need. Nor should they ever think of themselves as being independent from Him. They would never be anything but His representatives, so He added, "Nor [is] the one who is sent greater than the one who is sending him" (literal).

## John 13:17

**v17:** Knowing how difficult it would be to actually live out this command, He said, "If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them." They would have to strive to maintain these attitudes because pride and the desire to be served always attempt to replace humility and the desire to serve others. So He concluded with a promise. If they would follow His example and continue to do so, they would be "blessed." The word John used here, which is often translated as "blessed" (makarios), means to experience the happiness which comes when someone receives an abundance of the good things given by God (love, peace, joy, etc.). In other words Jesus was telling them that a lifestyle of humble service to others actually produces true happiness.

## John 13:18

**v18:** Apparently it was Jesus' humility and determination to go to the cross that made Judas so angry (Jn 12:4-6), so it's not hard to imagine that he was glaring at Jesus during the foot washing. It seems he had followed Jesus with the expectation that Jesus would, at some point, declare Himself to be the Messiah. When that moment came, as one of His disciples, Judas would naturally expect to be given a prominent role. Actually, some of the other disciples seem to have had that same hope (Mt 16:21-23; 20:20-21; Mk 10:35-37; Lk 19:11; Jn 6:15; Ac 1:6). So each time Jesus insisted that He was going to die violently (Mt 26:10-14), He provoked Judas to further anger. The events of that final evening must have been a miserable experience for him, and recognizing the struggle He was going through may be the reason why Jesus mentioned that not all of the disciples were clean (vs10-11) and quoted a verse from the Psalms in which David speaks of being betrayed by a friend. Though His disciples were unaware of what was taking place in Judas, Jesus was very aware of it and repeatedly warned him against the terrible course of action he had already initiated (Mt 26:14-16).

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## **John 13:18-19**

**vs18-19:** It was also necessary for Jesus to inform the rest of the disciples that He knew who it was who would betray Him, so that when it happened they would not begin to wonder whether or not He had made a mistake in choosing Judas as one of the Twelve (Lk 6:12-16). Jesus had gone off to pray and then had chosen someone who ended up betraying Him, which made it appear that He must have missed the Father's guidance. Yet His choice of Judas wasn't a mistake. John tells us that "Jesus knew from the beginning... who it was that would betray Him" (Jn 6:64), which means He knew what Judas would do before He chose him. The only way He knew that information was because the Father revealed it to Him, and the only reason He chose Judas was because the Father guided Him to choose him. If the Father's plan of salvation required a traitor to be placed among Jesus' disciples, then He had selected the traitor. Someone had to do it, and the Father knew Judas would. So choosing Judas had not been an accident. With that in mind, it is amazing that Jesus still treated him with such love and respect that none of the other disciples suspected Judas, even on that final evening.

## **John 13:18-19**

**vs18-19** (continued): Jesus based His warning on a quote from Psalm 41:9, "The one who eats my bread lifted up his heel against me." Those words picture someone who has raised his foot in order to kick someone else. In that culture to enter a person's home and eat with them was to enter into a bond of trust. To violate that trust was a profound betrayal. Indeed, that type of betrayal happened to David when his son Absalom tried to seize his kingdom (2Sa 15:7-14), but Jesus said the statement was ultimately meant to be a prophecy describing how He, the Messiah, would be betrayed. A trusted friend who regularly ate with Him would seek to destroy Him. At the time, none of the disciples knew who among them would do such a thing, but within hours they would discover who it was. And Jesus did not want them to doubt that He had followed the will of God in selecting Judas. So He pointed out that for a thousand years the Scriptures had announced that He would be betrayed that way.