

THIS IS JESUS

John 13-15: Last Day Lessons

- If you have ever lost someone close to you, you probably remember the last day that you ever spent with them pretty vividly.
 - Even if it was a pretty normal day, the details will stick out more, the conversations more memorable, because it was the last time you were with them.
 - I know my buddy Heath Greene, used to be on staff with me down in Shelby, had his dad passed away very unexpectedly, the day the COVID shutdowns began to happen.
 - It was a very normal day. They had some family in town so they all went to the Biltmore house and had some nice family time. Nothing over the top. If he hadn't passed away that night, nothing from that day would have really stood out, it would have been remembered as a nice time, but nothing super memorable.
- But since that was the last day he shared with his father, he remembers the conversations so much more clearly, can tell you exactly what his dad ate for dinner that evening, and the details are more memorable because it was the last time they were together.
 - I can't help but wonder if this is the reason John spent so much time writing about the last day he was with Jesus, before He went to the cross
 - Up to this point, the first 11-12 chapters of this book cover a 3 year span of Jesus' life
 - But now chapters 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and the beginning of 18 all cover the last Day Jesus spent with His disciples before He was arrested.
 - And John shares so much detail about what Jesus did and said on that day, and I would be willing to bet the details stuck in his mind so much because it was the last extended time that He would spend with the Person that he loved most.

- Now that I think about it, I probably should just do an entire series on The Last Day we read about here (maybe we'll do that next year)
 - But for today, we're going to give an overview of what Jesus was wanting to leave His disciples with. And in these chapters we are going to look at 3 of **JESUS' LAST DAY LESSONS** that He leaves His disciples with.
- We left off in chapter 11, last week, with Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead.
- Now Jesus' fame was at an all time high
- The day after, He makes His way into Jerusalem, and the people meet Him with palm branches and shouted praises to Him
 - Everyone is pumped and they're BELIEVING!
 - And Jesus knows that this is going to expedite His death, because the Pharisees not only want to kill Him, but also Lazarus as well
 - Everyone is talking about it and the Pharisees want to shut them up
- John does clarify however, in verse 42 to, ***"Many people did believe in Him, however, including some of the Jewish leaders. But they wouldn't admit it for fear that the Pharisees would expel them from the synagogue. For they loved human praise more than the praise of God."*** -John 12:42-43 (NLT)
 - It's a very humbling and troublesome truth that many people will miss out on the blessings of God because they love and desire the praise of other humans more than praise from the One who Created them.
 - Now, I originally wanted to say, many people will miss out on Heaven and the Kingdom of God because of this issue, however whenever I looked up the word "believe" in this passage, it was actually the greek word for "Saving Faith." It actually was that entrusting belief
 - And it made me think of a quote that I heard years back, not even sure who it was from

but it said, *“We have a lot of saved folks, but very few Christians.”*

- And this might be a little controversial, but we'll look at passages like this or people we would describe in this way, and quickly come to the judgement, “Oh there's no way that they're saved.”
 - *“Jesus said if you deny Me before men, I'll deny you before God.”*
 - *He said to, “Take up your cross, die to yourself daily.”*
 - *“You'll know them by their fruit”*
 - *“Not everyone that said ‘Lord, Lord’ will enter into the kingdom.”*
- But I wonder if maybe we should have a little but more grace than that. Maybe some people need some time to GROW in their new-found faith
- Man, I read this quote in my quiet times this week, ***“Spiritual growth is an ongoing***

process of the Holy Spirit making our condition equal our position.” -Tony Evans

- Whenever we come to faith our position is holy, righteous, redeemed, Children of Almighty God
 - But our condition is still broken and sinful.
 - But the beauty of grace is that our condition does not define us, our position does
- But for some reason it's like we expect people who come to faith to immediately turn into Super-Christians
- And if they don't, we conclude they must not be saved...
 - But you know I firmly believe that we're gonna be blown away one day by who we see in Heaven
 - But at the same time, I think we'll be blown away by who we don't see there as well
- So how exactly are we supposed to know who's saved and who isn't saved?? Maybe it's not up to you to know

- *Maybe we should just focus on our relationship with God and loving other people the way He loves us*
- *Maybe instead of inspecting everyone else, we should focus on the log in our eye instead of the spec in theirs*
- *(Jesus also said those ones too!)*
- Because even the most seasoned Christians are not immune to caring more about what people think than what God does
- Even the disciples even on Jesus' Last Day, as they're making their way to the Garden right before Jesus is arrested, they still take out the time, as Luke describes, ***“A dispute also arose among them, as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest.” -Luke 22:24 (ESV)***
- Jesus had been trying to break them of this mindset for 3 years now, but they still weren't there, and it was very evident that Jesus needed to add this into His Last Day Lessons,

if you look at the beginning of chapter 13, it reads:

- ***“Before the Passover celebration, Jesus knew that His hour had come to leave this world and return to His Father. He had loved His disciples during His ministry on earth, and now He loved them to the very end. It was time for supper, and the devil had already prompted Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had given Him authority over everything and that He had come from God and would return to God. So He got up from the table, took off His robe, wrapped a towel around His waist, and poured water into a basin. Then He began to wash the disciples' feet, drying them with the towel He had around Him.” -John 13:1-5 (NLT)***
- **LAST DAY LESSON #1: LEADERS SERVE FIRST**

- Now, I don't really like to talk on leadership specifically much because I feel like it is way over done and I have a lot of pet peeves about how leadership is talked about.
 - But I think this is very relatable to us right now, because I believe everyone in this room is a leader in this church or at least will be.
 - Because whenever the time comes that God inevitably grows this church, you know who I'm going to be looking to to help lead? You!
 - Because you're here now, and you're serving first
 - If God decides to send 200 people over here one Sunday morning, and Emma's being over run with kids back there, you know what I'm going to ask you to do? Go help her!
 - If we run out of seats, I'm going to ask you to give up yours...why? Because I see you as the leaders of this church.
- And Jesus here in this passage, is intentionally giving a lesson on leadership here to those that eventually will be the leaders of the New Testament Church
- I love the way Jesus talked about leadership, because He never used the word Lead, Leader, or Leadership...He always talked about it in the context of serving
 - *He says people will know you are My disciples if you love one another like I have loved you.*
 - *He says if you want to be great, you need to make yourself the least*
 - *He says if you want to be first you have to put yourself last*
- And He drove home the point, that so few of us understand anymore, and that is that leadership is not about obtaining a position, it's about serving others
- You can see a stark contrast between the two dinners described in chapters 12 and 13.

- At the beginning of chapter 12, they were having dinner in Jesus' honor and celebrating Lazarus' resurrection
 - And Mary, Lazarus' sister is so overwhelmed with gratitude, that John tells us, ***“Then Mary took a twelve-ounce jar of expensive perfume made from essence of nard, and she anointed Jesus' feet with it, wiping His feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance.” -John 12:3 (NLT)***
- It was custom, in that day and age, before people would share a meal, they were very intentional about washing.
- Before they would enter the house or dining room, they would wash their hands with the water from the jars of purification that we saw in Chapter 2.
- But then whenever they would sit down to eat, a servant would come around and wash the feet of those at the meal.
 - They lived in a very dusty region and everyone wore sandals, they lounged on the ground while they ate, so you didn't want a bunch of dusty feet leaving dirty everywhere
 - It was practical
- But when Jesus came to eat at Mary and Martha's house, Mary wasn't going to wait around for the servant to wash Jesus' feet, and she wasn't just going to use basic water.
- She got the most expensive perfume in the house, the most expensive thing she owned, and cleaned his feet
 - Of course Judas had something smart to say, he's just like, “Pfft, that perfume is worth a whole years worth of wages, she shouldn't be wasting it like that when it could be given to the poor...”
 - Of course he didn't care about the poor, but he was the group treasurer and had been skimmin' off the top

- Side note: Leadership definitely isn't about being paid the most or getting the most money....because you know how much stock Jesus put in money? He let Judas be in charge of it
- But we see the extravagant humility of Mary here at this dinner. And we also see her being the first person that Jesus saw whenever He rose from the grave. And she was entrusted to go share the first ever gospel message, telling people of His resurrection.
- She served first, and showed extravagant humility... but then fast forward a week, Peter and John are sent to go prepare the upper room for the passover meal.
- And they took care of everything for the meal, but there aren't any servants there to serve them, or to wash anyone's feet.
- It doesn't even cross their minds that any of them should be the foot washers, not even for Jesus and DEFINITELY not for each other
- They could be looking at each other, like "Should we just go ahead and sit down? Yea, as long as you don't touch me with those dirty feet bro!"
- And they all start to take their places...but then Jesus gets up, takes His jacket off...ties a towel around His waist, puts water into a basin, and goes around and starts washing everyone's feet...one by one
- And there's an awkward silence in the room
 - And I would be willing to bet that they weren't confused, wondering what Jesus was doing. They probably knew. They had been with Jesus long enough now to get it
 - They're probably thinking "Man, I should have done that. He's doing it, because none of us would..."
- But then, of course, the awkward silence is then broken by Peter....who says, "Whoa whoa whoa whoa, you're not gonna wash my feet!"
 - Trying to make up for it now....

- But then Jesus tells him, “Unless I do this, you won’t be able to have anything to do with me...”
- Then Peter says you win, If You wanna wash my hands, my hair, whatever You want, You do You...”
- Then in verse 12 we read, **“After washing their feet, He put on His robe again and sat down and asked, “Do you understand what I was doing? You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and you are right, because that’s what I Am. And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other’s feet. I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you.” -John 13:12-15 (NLT)**
- Now, I am not of the camp that believes that Jesus is instructing us to have foot washings be a regular part of our services
- I have heard of people being a part of foot washing ceremonies and had some powerful testimonies and stories...I’m not knocking, I’m just saying Rachel would probably leave our church...
- I don’t think foot washing was the point, I think the point was about serving each other, taking care of one another, being willing to count others more significant than yourself
- And look at the way Jesus served them:
- Look at how intentionally He served. He got up from the table, He took off His robe, wrapped a towel around His waist, poured the water, and began to wash...
 - His serving wasn’t on a whim, it was methodical and intentional
 - His serving was complete, He didn’t just wash their feet, He dried them with a towel
 - He never left anything halfway done. If He was going to take the form of a servant He was going to see the job all the way through and be the best possible servant He could be.

- He served intentionally, He served completely, and He served everyone!
 - That's what blows my mind about this more than anything else. In verse 11 it says that HE KNEW Judas was going to betray Him in just a few short moments.
 - Jesus knew EVERYTHING that was about to happen to Him. He knew Judas was gonna betray Him, Peter would deny Him, the disciples would scatter and leave Him...and yet He served them
 - Verse 1 says that He LOVED them to the very end
 - Jesus was so much less concerned about what they could do for Him, and more focused on who He could BE for them.
- What if we could get to the point where we served out of the sheer love for others?
 - Not thinking about how it might benefit us or what we might get out of it, or the recognition we should get for it, but just

unconditionally loving and serving others like Jesus did. How can we get to that place?

- Well verse 3 tells us where Jesus' motivation for serving came from.
- It says, "**Jesus knew that the Father had given Him authority over everything and that He had come from God and would return to God. So He got up from the table...**" -**John 13:3-4a**
- Here's something to remember, "The more secure you are in your Heavenly position, the less insecure you will be in your earthly position."
- Think about it, why are we so hesitant to take the form of a servant like Jesus did, or cringe at the thought of lowering ourselves and counting others more significant than ourselves?
 - It's insecurity...we are terrified of being low on the totem pole and we feel like we have to

do everything we can to prove that we are important or valuable

- I know the feeling, I grew up the youngest of 5, and I can't tell you how many times I've heard, "Kenny, you're the youngest, you don't even tell the dog what to do!"
- And in turn, I developed a complex where I thought I had to constantly prove that I was a leader, that I had value, that I was worthy of recognition...
 - And it's a mind set that I have to constantly fight against.
 - I've had many people tell me in this season and in the context of a portable church say that I need to get the team to the point where I don't need to lift a finger during the set up and just focus on the sermon
 - And my selfish and insecure heart naturally responds to that with, "Yea that's right, because I'm the pastor!"
- So in turn, I need to combat that heart...I need to help with the set up for at least an hour before I go over my sermon in the morning
- I don't do that because I'm super spiritual, but rather because I'm super NOT spiritual and need to keep my heart in check
- I never want to ask anything of anyone that I have not already done or willing to do myself
- I've heard it said, "If you're not willing to hold a toilet brush, you have no business holding a microphone."
- But Jesus gives us the blue print of how to cultivate a TRUE SERVANTS HEART
- If we know, and become confident and secure in the Father. Know that we have been given spiritual authority as Children of God, know that everything that we have comes from God, and that we will be returning to God once this vapor of a life is over,

- Well then we can begin to serve out of a place of true confidence and genuine love, because we won't be looking to gain anything from anyone else because we will already be secure in everything we've been given in Christ
- Again, "The more secure you are in your Heavenly position, the less insecure you will be in your earthly position."
- These things may make sense on an intellectual level, however it's so much easier said than done...
- And the disciples were still a long way off of really being able to put this into practice
- That's why Jesus was giving these Last Day Lessons, because one of the things they were going to have to hurdle was their pride (Which is why serving is emphasized)
- But the other thing they were going to have to hurdle was Fear

**- LAST DAY LESSON #2: DON'T LET FEAR DRIVE ("Let not your heart's be troubled."
-John 14:1)**

- Now let's look at this entire scene..
- After Jesus washes their feet and they begin to eat, Jesus points out that He's going to be betrayed, and that He's going to be leaving.
- Verse 33 Jesus says, ***"Dear children, I will be with you only a little longer. And as I told the Jewish leaders, you will search for Me, but you can't come where I am going."***-John 12:33 (NLT)
- Peter says uh-uh, ***"Peter asked, "Lord, where are You going?" And Jesus replied, "You can't go with Me now, but you will follow Me later." "But why can't I come now, Lord?" he asked. "I'm ready to die for You." Jesus answered, "Die for me? I tell you the truth, Peter—before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will***

deny three times that you even know Me.”

-John 13:36-38 (NLT)

- BUT ***“Don’t let your hearts be troubled.”***

-John 14:1 (NLT)

- So let me get this straight: Jesus, the guy that they left their entire lives behind for and have followed for the past 3 years, tells them that He’s leaving, They can’t go with Him. And Peter, His most devote follower is going to deny Him?? And then the very next thing He says is, “Don’t let your hearts be troubled.”

- “NO! I’M TROUBLED JESUS!!”

- Fear is a funny thing. And there’s all kinds of things that we fear. And for me, you know, I don’t really fear death, I don’t really fear not fulfilling a purpose, I don’t really fear failure, dying alone or anything like that..but you know what I really fear?? SPIDERS

- I can’t stand spiders, I got bit as a kid, allergic reaction, had a thing with them ever since..

- College Story

- But you see that’s exactly what fear does...
- The enemy wants to hold fear over our lives, because fear stops us in our tracks, fear causes us to hesitate, it keeps us stuck, and keeps us from moving forward
- We fear many things, maybe the most common is the fear of the unknown
 - Where am I going, what am I supposed to be doing, am I doing it right, what’s going to happen when I die?
 - And the disciples are going to be asking all of those questions whenever Jesus isn’t physically there with them anymore.
- Jesus gives us the answer to every single one of these fears when He says, ***“I am The Way, The Truth, and The Life. No one can come to the Father except through Me.”***
-John 14:6 (NLT)
- Now this has eternal implications but also present and practical implications as well

- Because how many of us want to know THE WAY?? Yes the way to God, but also just also the way of life as well??
- SO many of us spend so much time in fear of making the wrong decision, doing things the wrong way, or going in the wrong direction
- But Jesus says, just follow Me! I AM THE WAY
 - ***“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in (commits to) Me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father.” -John 14:12 (ESV)***
 - Jesus wants to use your life to make an eternal impact, He wants to do works through you that will lead people to believe in Him, and He wants to do it on an EVEN GREATER scale than what He did
- So many people wont accept this because as soon as you think about making an impact, you start thinking about all of your mistakes, where you’ve come from, the sins that have

been so easily entrapping you, and you think to yourself...”*theres no way I can make that kind of impact, nobody is going to listen to me...im just an average Christian”*

- If you notice, Jesus did not discriminate...He said WHOEVER! Believes in Me, will carry on My ministry, and go even further!
 - *Not just the pastors, worship leaders, or so called “Super Christians” BUT YOU! And how can it be you? Because...Its not about you!*
 - *It’s not about who you are what you’ve done and what you’ve struggled with! Its about Him, what He has done, and the power of His Holy Spirit that indwells you and what He can do through you!*
- We can do even greater things because JESUS IS EVEN GREATER:
 - Past
 - Circumstances
 - Addiction

Sunday, March 26, 2023

- Marital Problems
- Unemployment
- Family History
- The Future and the Unknown
- You no longer have to live in fear, your heart does not have to be troubled because of WHO HE IS and the brand new Life He has given you
- You know what my question is??: Why do we live in so much fear of making the wrong decision when we serve a God who works all things together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose?!
- ALL THINGS....means all things
 - I'm not where I am in life because of the good decisions I made, By the grace of God I am what I am
 - And if we are going to be imitators of God as dearly loved children, like Ephesians 5:1 says....you know what Children do?? MAKE MISTAKES
- And God has grace for that, He's going to work it out, and you just have to keep moving forward with Him as your main focus and motivation
- But whenever we inevitably make mistakes, that's when the enemy comes in, to remind you of all of the fear that you've ever had.
 - All of those excuses and insecurities that you used to hold on to that made you believe you couldn't make a true impact or difference are now coming up to the forefront of your mind again
- And that's why we need THE TRUTH
 - ***“And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth.” -John 14:16-17 (NLT)***
 - He also says in verse 26 ***“But when the Father sends the Advocate as My Representative – that is, the Holy Spirit – He will teach you everything and will***

remind you of everything I have told you.”

-John 14:26 (NLT)

- This is an incredible aspect of the ministry of the Holy Spirit
 - And how He brings HOPE into every situation
- *Whenever nothing seems to be satisfying the Spirit can remind me of Jesus saying, “I AM the bread of life”*
- *When everything seems dark, I can hear Him saying, “I AM The Light of the World”*
- *When I seem to be lost, the Spirit says, “I AM the Door, I AM The Good Shepherd”*
- *When I feel hopeless and helpless, Jesus is saying, “ I AM the WAY, The Truth, and the Life”*
- *Whenever I feel alone, He reminds me, “I will never Leave you or Forsake You.”*
 - *You see, we so desperately need the Holy Spirit to remind us of the Goodness and Promises of God because fear is always*

lurking around the corner, trying to rear its ugly head while we follow the way of Jesus to try cause us to hesitate and get us off track

- But Jesus promises that, in Him, we can be confident along the way, and stand in the Truth, and really LIVE THE LIFE
 - ***“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” -John 14:27 (NKJV)***
 - We can live the fullest life, because Jesus gives us peace no matter what life may throw at us.
 - Remember He says, I don't give as the world gives. You see, the world sees peace as an opening in the schedule, time off, or some form of ease.
 - But Jesus' Peace is a supernatural feeling of overwhelming comfort that can come only by

the Holy Spirit in the times that are most hectic.

- I'm telling you life is much more full whenever we have peace in the midst of chaos and love in the face of fear.
- And John made a great distinction in his epistle whenever he said: ***"There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love."*** -1 John 4:18 (ESV)
- Many people will read this verse and think, "Oh if I'm afraid, that means God doesn't love me. Or if I feel fear that means I'm not standing and trusting in the love of God!"
- But if you look closer at what John is saying we see he actually uses two different greek words for fear:
 - **Fear: Phobos-** "fear, dread, or terror"
 - The Feeling of Fear

- **Fear: Phobeo-** "to put to flight by terrifying (to scare away)"

- Letting Fear Drive
- So if you look at this passage again with those words in mind we see that it reads:
 - ***"There is no [Phobos] in love, but perfect love casts out [Phobos]. For [Phobos] has to do with punishment, and whoever [Phobeo] has not been perfected in love."*** -1 John 4:18 (ESV)
- God's love has given us no reason to be afraid, because of His love we have NOTHING to fear
 - But we are human, and we have those initial feelings and emotions and situations where we are scared
 - There's Grace for that
 - Jesus in the garden
 - But Jesus did not allow the Phobos to turn into Phobeo, and He went to the

cross and perfectly obeyed the Father's will to rescue humanity from the shackles of sin and darkness

- God wants to build your faith in such a way that the fear no longer dictates your actions, where fear no longer silences the truth in your life...where it no longer keeps you from obedience and following the WAY
- And the only way that can be possible is through Jesus' third last day lesson, He says, in chapter 15 verse 5 ***"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."*** -John 15:5 (NKJV)
- **LAST DAY LESSON #3: STAY CLOSE TO JESUS**
- Jesus is saying the only way that you are going to effectively and selflessly serve, the only way that you can overcome fear, is if you abide in Me

- If you stay close to Jesus
- And I really wish we had the time to really get into all of the implications and teachings that Jesus gives throughout these chapters, and again, maybe we will later
- But to paraphrase Jesus tells them:
 - The only way you're going to bear any fruit in this life, is if you stay attached to Me
 - People are going to hate you and persecute you because of your faith, but you can endure if you stay close to Me
 - Things are going to get confusing, but if you stay in step with My Spirit, He will lead you into all truth
 - He says that you are going to experience pain and sorrow, but whenever come to Him, Joy will prevail
- And He ends His last discussion with His disciple on His last day with this: ***"I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have***

trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” -John 16:33 (NIV)

- You see, Jesus wants you to have the fullest life possible while you are still on this planet. And even the fullest life is still going to experience pain, and sorrow, and trouble
- But we can really take heart, because the life that He offers doesn't stop at this one.
- But because Jesus endured more suffering and pain than we could ever imagine on that cross...and because He got out of that grave and ascended into Heaven, He opened the door for us to be able to walk into eternal life
- And to paraphrase something CS Lewis once said, “The ones that make the most impact in this temporary world, are the ones that are most focused on the eternity that comes after.”
- So stay close to Jesus. Keep focused on Him and Eternity
- And the more we do that, the less fear will be able to dictate our lives, and the more we can

effectively serve others without expecting anything for ourselves.

- Because we have everything we could ever need in Jesus.
- CLOSING PRAYER: HAVE YOU BEEN STAYING CLOSE TO JESUS?