

In the midst of knowing everything that was about to occur, Jesus poured out love and care for each one around the table. This recollection of what Jesus did just before his suffering was to begin is utterly amazing. I want us for just a moment to recall someone who has hurt you, not a slight but someone who has caused hurt, so much that you remember it even now. Can you imagine going to this person, kneeling at their feet and washing them? It seems beyond impossible to live in such a way. And yet, this is the way we are called to live in the world.

Jesus was doing a new thing, not just at the table this night but throughout his whole life. And Jesus' ways were uncomfortable for many. Jesus was not about being liked but was always about always about love, grace & truth. We spent all of Advent, Christmas and now Lent in the Gospel of John, only stopping briefly with the Apostle Paul to better understand love. And in these weeks and months my heart has grown as well as my faith.

We can only ever imagine how we would have chosen if we'd been the disciples around the table with Jesus. Would we be the hothead? Would we be the betrayer? Would we be the denier? Would we be the doubter? Would we be quiet in the background, trying not to draw attention to ourselves? Would we be the one silently anointing Jesus' feet? Would we be crying out to Jesus, why were you not here sooner! Would we be weeping at the cross? I think we are all of these and more throughout our lifetime. We always hope that we've at least grown and are making new mistakes.

As we hear again from the Gospel of John, our reading this night begins with the declaration that Jesus having loved his own in the world, he

loved them to the end. Our scripture for this night ends with Jesus commanding that we are to be known by our love in the world. In between the declaration & commandment, Jesus humbles himself and sends Judas to betray him quickly. Any one of those would be mind boggling and emotionally draining, and yet this was just the beginning of the events of this night.

How many of us, if given the chance, would skip over Holy Week? Not because it adds things to do in the week but because it is hard. The story is so much better if only we could go from the Palm Parade to the empty tomb. We don't really have to go through all the pain in the middle do we? I know, I'm preaching to the choir because each of you are here (or watching from home), you're doing the work. But for so many, this week is not what matters. And yet, it's the pain and difficulty of today and tomorrow, the grief and silence of Saturday that make Sunday, and indeed every day transformational.

We do not like to be betrayed by anyone, let alone a close friend. We do not like being humbled by someone telling us how we should live our lives. But this is what makes us different. Jesus was betrayed and chose humility for our sake. Jesus suffered and died so he alone held the keys to hell and death. Jesus was resurrected so that we may have eternal life. Jesus does not ask us to be crucified with him, but we are to take up the cross and follow. Jesus asks us to humble ourselves and wash another's feet. Jesus asks us to love and be known for our love by the world.

Throughout these three holy days, we are called to reflect on how we are known by friends and the world around us. We are called to humble

ourselves in service for others. We are called to follow Jesus to the cross and wait in silence until he returns. May this time of waiting be marked with deeper understanding of who Jesus was, who Jesus is and what Jesus is calling us to do. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.