

Coffee To Go | Maundy Thursday

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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SPEAKERS

Karin Peter, Blake Smith

Karin Peter 00:27

Welcome to Coffee To Go, where we center ourselves in the scriptures, seasons and holy days of the Christian tradition. I'm Karin Peter here with Blake Smith, and we welcome you in the journey. Today's episode is for Maundy Thursday, or in some traditions is called Holy Thursday. And our question about our journey, "Where are we with Jesus this week on Maundy Thursday?" We find ourselves at the Passover dinner with Jesus and his disciples. And it is at this dinner, where Jesus says something surprising that his followers are a little bit confused by, that it is all in his way of modeling what it means to be a disciple, or what disciple actually means ... a student of Jesus. So let's hear about this meal.

Blake Smith 01:21

All right. Well, our passage today comes from the Gospel according to John, the 13th chapter, and it is the 1st through the 17th verse, and the 31st through the 35th verse. Now, before the Festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that His hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father, Having loved His own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, to betray him. And during supper, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God, and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples feet, and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." And Peter said to Him, "you will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "unless I wash you, you have no share with me." Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands in my head." Jesus said to him, "one who has bathed, does not need to wash except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you." For he knew who was to betray him. For this reason, he said, not all of you are clean. After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe and had returned to the table, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you're right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them." When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify Him in himself, and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little longer, you will look for me and as I said to the Jews, so now I say to you, where I am going, you cannot come. I

give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you should also love one another. By this, everyone will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another.”

So why does this matter on this Maundy Thursday? You know, as I read this passage, Jesus is doing some of the most menial tasks which, you know, as a leader, he probably could have had a servant or a slave come in and do. And yet, he does them himself, to emphasize the character of God and God's people which is about humility and service to others. And that service is born in love. The other thing about this is that, for me, I think Jesus puts himself in this incredible place of vulnerability, not just humility. I mean, he takes off his outer cloak, he wraps a towel around himself, and he kneels at their feet. And that is a sign of subservience, if you will, and just really opens himself up to vulnerability. So the example in the model that he's setting here is tremendous. But it's one that's really difficult for us in this time and age ... to really open ourselves and be vulnerable to those around us. But he very carefully challenges these disciples who are his students to do the same, you know, God is glorified in our humble service. So when we act in alignment with God's character, like engaging in acts of humble service to others, not because it's our responsibility, or our duty or obligation, or because we want acclaim for it, but simply because we have a deep and abiding love for others, and those who are “othered” by us, by our actions, and by our words, that's what glorifies God. That's what gives glory to God. And that is what we are called to do. It's interesting, the song we sing, and we're very familiar with “Humble yourself before the Lord,” I think Jesus would say, in this case, humble yourself before others. And that's a tough charge, and a powerful charge all at the same time.

Karin Peter 06:50

So I want to go back to where you said, not out of duty or obligation. So sometimes, we do acts of humble service, because we want someone to tell us we did a good job. Or sometimes obviously, we do acts of humble service begrudgingly, because it's our responsibility. But the whole idea that you do it out of love is complicated, I think for people because it's like, well, if I don't love them, do I still have to do acts of service? For them, maybe I'm just looking for a loophole. But I remember my dad used to always say, I don't know where he read it. But he would say, “some people say that you do good things for those you love. But in reality, we love those we do good things for.” When you do the good things for someone, that's how your love begins to grow in new ways for them in those interactions. I just thought that kind of describes what Jesus, what's going on, and the disciples.

Blake Smith 07:56

Yeah. Yeah, that's really interesting. It makes me think. I so, my wife and I do some service in the community. And sometimes we're joined by people who are obviously doing it out of court-ordered community service. Yeah, I'd be interested to talk to them sometime. Because that's a great perspective to think you know, that we learned to love those we do service for. So I wonder if it changes the hearts sometimes of those who are doing it for those reasons.

All right. Well, some questions we might ask ourselves are...

Am I willing to humble myself in front of others to be vulnerable? And what does that look like in my life?

Is love for others part of my character would be another question.

Karin Peter 08:41

That's a really hard question when you really start to look at that. And it's a short question, but it's, it's a difficult question. Yeah.

Blake Smith 08:50

Yeah, it really is. So how can we experience that this week Karin?

Karin Peter 08:54

Oh, gosh, I guess it's not really this week, when we put the the outline together. It's today, which is on a Thursday. So how can we kind of do that today? So today for Maundy Thursday, just keep in mind, kind of how can I glorify God today? What act of service? What act of humble service can I do for someone else without wanting anything in return? And I think that's probably a good way to kind of honor the intent of this version of this scripture from Maundy Thursday.

Blake Smith 09:33

Great. Well, our blessing today might surprise some of our listeners, but it comes from Confucius, because Confucius had something to say about character.

If there is righteousness in the heart, there will be beauty in the character. If there'll be beauty in the character, there will be harmony in the house. If there is harmony in the house, there will be order in the night. nation. If there is order in the nation, there will be peace in the world.

Well, thanks for joining us for Maundy Thursday, we hope to have you join us again tomorrow for Good Friday and again on Holy Saturday, and we invite you, as always, to join us at Coffee to Go for the next part of our journey through the liturgical seasons and holy days of the Christian tradition.