

Coffee to Go | Maundy Thursday | Year C

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Holy Thursday, Jesus' last supper, disciples, humility, service, foot washing, liturgical seasons.

SPEAKERS

Blake Smith, Karin Peter

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, and I'm here with Blake Smith, and we welcome you in the journey. Today is Maundy Thursday or Holy Thursday, and we are with Jesus on Maundy Thursday. We're with Jesus the night before Passover at dinner. He is with His disciples, and it is on Maundy Thursday, where we read Jesus surprises his followers with what it means to be a disciple or a student or a follower of Jesus.

Blake Smith 01:07

So here we are in the Gospel according to John. It is the 13th chapter, and we're going to read the 1st through the 17th verse and then pick up again at the 31st verse 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 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." 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 and my head." Jesus said to him, "one who is 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 are 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 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 also should 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? Well, just like on Palm Sunday, we get a strong message of humility and service to others, the service coming out in the washing of feet. Some of you may have immediately cringed at the thought of someone washing your feet. I know that that's not as acceptable in our current culture as it was back then, but this is just an incredible model of humility and service. Jesus here is doing perhaps one of the most menial tasks to emphasize the character of God and God's people. Humility and service to others born in love, and that is a key component, obviously, as we hear in the end of that passage, just as I have loved you, so you should also love one another. He very carefully challenges them as his students to do the same as He has done. He points out here that God is glorified in our humble service, so when we act in alignment with God's character, and when we engage in acts of humble service to others, and not because it's our duty or our obligation or our responsibility, or because we want someone to acknowledge us, but because we have a deep and abiding love for others and the others "othered", I would say an air quote. So, we kind of "other" people as a verb, not just as a noun representing other people.

Karin Peter 06:04

We "other" whole groups of people. I mean, right now you hear dialog that others, immigrants, who others, undocumented, who others, refugees, who others, trans people. I mean, it's just this horrible chain of selecting individuals or groups of people to say you're not worth my or I'm better than you. You're not worth my attention or my time or my acts of service. And it's just it's horrifying.

Blake Smith 06:37

Yeah, I hate to say it being one of a particular group, but it seems to be with very few exceptions, othering anybody who's not a white male.

Karin Peter 06:50

Yeah, and for you to say that as a white male, thank you, Blake, because it has to be acknowledged at this point.

Blake Smith 07:00

Yeah, it is. It is shameful to be in that group and realize what's happening. We hear stories of how it happened so much in the past, and we would have hoped to have that behind us, but obviously it is nowhere near behind us. So again, God is glorified in our humble service, and when we have a deep and abiding love for others, the song, "Humble Yourself Before the Lord" here would be humble yourself before others. Yes, that's just as important to God.

Karin Peter 07:42

And when you do so to others, you're doing it unto me. That's a poor paraphrase of Scripture, but there you go,

Blake Smith 07:49

Right. And that is not what we are taught in our culture. So a question that we can ask ourselves on this Maundy Thursday, and as we continue toward Easter is, am I willing to humble myself in front of others? And what does that look like in my life? That's probably enough, but I'm going to give you another one, and that is, is love for others part of my character?

Karin Peter 08:22

We can ponder that this, Maundy Thursday, and as we move into Good Friday, Holy Saturday and finally Easter, keep in mind, what act of service can I do for someone else, without any strings, without wanting anything in return, and see what that looks like for your rest of Holy Week,

Blake Smith 08:47

Right. And our blessing today is by Douglas McKelvey, and it's called "Every Moment Holy" coming from *A liturgy for Domestic Days*.

Many are the things that must be daily done. Meet me therefore, oh Lord, in the doing of the small, repetitive tasks, in the cleaning and ordering and maintenance and stewardship of things, of dishes, of floors, of carpets and toilets and tubs, of scrubbing and sweeping and dusting and laundering, that by such stewardship, I might bring a greater order to my own life and to the lives of any I am given to serve, so that in those ordered spaces bright things might flourish, fellowship and companionship, creativity and conversation, learning and laughter and enjoyment and health. As I steward the small, daily tasks, may I remember these good ends, and so discover in my labors the promise of the eternal hopes that underlie them. Amen.

Well, thank you for joining us here at Coffee to Go and as always, we invite you to join us next time for the next part of our journey through the liturgical seasons and holy days of the Christian tradition.