

# 1/9/22 - John 13:18-30 - "Providence in the Face of Evil"

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[ 0 : 00 ] We're reminded, just previously in the passage of the greatest act of humility that we studied last week as Jesus washed the disciples' feet.

This is an act that was very symbolic. It pointed to something. It pointed, it forecasted forward to the image of the cross, of submitting himself to the greatest service of man, substituting his dignity, getting on his knees, washing the disciples' feet, a lowly task.

Not even a Jewish slave would complete that. It would be a Gentile slave. It was a lowly task. And in so doing, he submitted himself to the lowly service of man, surrendering his dignity for humiliation.

And this is an image of what happens forward at the cross. And one thing we have to do is be careful. We must not lose track of the backdrop, we'll say, of John 13, the backdrop of this entire passage.

Often as we approach such an intimate scene in Scripture, we ignore the tone of the text and just kind of marvel at Jesus washing the disciples' feet.

[ 1 : 18 ] And preachers will let loose like a cannon and do as Jesus did, wash everyone's feet, even your enemies. And then they'll see a text like this where it gets to this closeness with Jesus of leaning back on his chest.

And then sometimes the church might break out. You know, I want to sit at your feet, drink from the cup in your hand, and all this 90 rhetoric will come out, and we're all of a sudden, it's a song that's, we don't know if it's to our boyfriends or girlfriends or to Jesus.

And we just get lost in this intimate scene of closeness. But we have to be careful not to lose the backdrop of tone in this text.

And that's going to be important. This tone drives the emphasis within this passage. It drives the passage and the storyline throughout.

Let me put it simple today in the simplest terms for us as we continue. Jesus is in a cosmic battle right now.

[ 2 : 27 ] He is in a cosmic battle. This battle has been raging for centuries upon centuries upon centuries. Into the Garden of Eden when Eve was deceived, Adam rebelled.

This sends all the way back. This is a cosmic battle that is taking place. Let's just put a picture in our heads of the scene in the upper room as we continue into this night.

If we could picture in our minds for a moment this upper room narrative. And spiritually speaking, if we could imagine the things that we cannot see occurring within the unknown realms of reality, it would be as if outside of the window of this upper room, you would see a category 5 hurricane just swirling and the winds blowing around this location.

This is a cosmic battle. But within this room, there seems to be peace. There seems to be utter peace.

But where does this peace derive from? Obviously, it's easy to say that it comes from Jesus being in his presence. But we need to dissect that a little bit.

[ 3 : 52 ] What is the source? What is Jesus doing? How does Jesus bring peace in this storm? How on earth can we, in our day and age today, experience similar peace that was experienced then?

Well, today, we'll be continuing into this introduction of Jesus' farewell discourse that will continue in the days ahead.

And how we'll continue is finishing the second half of Jesus' monologue that he started. The red letters started before verse 18.

However, before verse 18, it was all about Jesus' monologue of emulation, of following after his ways and abiding in him.

The second half of the monologue, however, is about the opposite. It's about rejection. It's about betrayal. It's about abandonment. So John kind of switches gears right here in this monologue from verse 17 to verse 18.

[ 5 : 01 ] And I want to enter into this stormy scene and learn something about peace today, on this day, January 9th. Let's pray as we do this.

Father, we come to you and we are humbled by the power of your word. We pray that the power of your word is so clearly evident within this body that our lives are just affected in such a way that our best excuse in life to not follow you is just cut in half.

We pray that even our following of you, our pride is just cut in half. Father, your word is a double-edged sword that cuts to the marrow.

Father, we pray that your word cuts today. That we can look at the world in a reality and a realm of which you've created.

You desire for us to respond according to how your word instructs us. Help us right now, Lord, as we come to your word asking for your guidance.

[ 6 : 08 ] And we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. So we're going to break this up into two sections just as John breaks it up.

And the first section is looking at verse 18 to, I believe, 21. And we see the pronouncement of evil. And Jesus continues to say, I'm not speaking of all of you.

I know whom I have chosen. Meaning that each and every one of his disciples, he knew why he was choosing them. That he made no mistake.

That's important in this passage. I'm not speaking of all of you. I know whom I have chosen. I don't make a mistake. But the scripture will be fulfilled. He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.

As Jesus finishes the second half of this monologue, John makes sure to detail for us today the cosmic battle raging around the unseen.

[ 7 : 14 ] A battle that is nearly in fulfillment. That is fulfilled in the cross. This is a battle that Paul talks about in Ephesians 6. It says, for our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of the dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly, also known as cosmological realms.

And Jesus quotes the nature of this battle. This is something that's been going on for a long time. And it's only by this evil in which he will be able to fulfill a prophecy.

This is prophesied detail from long ago. By embedding it within their current situation in the text today is the scope of biblical theology, specifically revolving around what he quotes in Psalm 41, verse 9, of David's betrayal of a close friend, a counselor known as Ahithophel.

And by Jesus informing those around of such betrayal that was foreshadowed in the life of David, he is providing evidence of the awareness that Jesus Christ is standing in the messianic line of David.

That this is no ordinary betrayal. This is betrayal that was typologically forecasted for this day and age right now, that Jesus is fulfilling the pattern of the righteous sufferer who similarly faced opposition from a friend and foe, found in Psalm 41.

[ 8 : 58 ] And just as the psalm finished, David makes it clear that despite his betrayal in Psalm 41, despite that betrayal from a friend, he would be vindicated by God, which serves as a typological reference that Jesus is a type of David.

David was sort of like that shadow of Jesus that would be coming in the line of David. And this is mentioning the glorification that will take place by God's power as a result of such betrayal.

And he says, after quoting Psalm 41, that this has been prophesied long ago. This is nothing new. And so don't be surprised. But I'm telling you this in verse 19, before it takes place, I'm prophesying to you right now in verse 19, that when it does take place, you will know that I am he.

He uses words of divinity here. Ego I me. I am who I am. That the disciples will know that he is God. In other words, it will be through the means of betrayal that God will glorify himself. It will be through the means of darkness that you will be experiencing the true light of God shining brightly.

[ 10 : 29 ] And in verse 20, you have a choice to receive or reject him. To receive Jesus Christ is to receive the one who sent him. And then it goes into just this moment of shock.

Because if you could imagine being a disciple, being chosen, having the high honor of being a chosen disciple of Jesus Christ, sitting at the table, chilling with him, reclining with him. You just washed your feet. Clearly, you're chosen and you're one of them. Jesus flips the entire script. And he says, after saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit and testified. Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me. You can almost feel the shock wave. The sonic boom hit that room.

You could probably feel it in our imaginations right now. This is a moment that da Vinci actually encapsulated within his famous painting, The Last Supper.

[11:39] That this very moment of shock and inquiring, looking around the room, you'll see in that painting of The Last Supper. He decided to capture this very shock wave moment.

John, make sure we don't lose sight of this surrounding storm. Because that right there was a crash of thunder.

This takes me back, personally, to back in his triumphal entry, when we found out that Jesus was also troubled back then.

What was troubling him at that moment was the fact that the Son of Man would be lifted up in John 12, 27. And he said, now is my soul troubled at that reality.

And when we're talking about troubled, this is a word that means that he's under high anxiety. He's agitated. It's a sign of horror of knowing what is up ahead.

[12:47] And the same horror exists at the reality of his betrayal. I asked a few moments where peace is found, especially when darkness is surrounding.

Peace is found in this, that despite the pronouncement of evil embedded within the framework, the typological framework of King David, even the most treacherous act, church, occurs in God's hands and sovereign promise.

This becomes an occasion of trusting in God. Of great, deep, incognitive awareness. A trust that is deeply seated in the providence of God.

It's a promise that God will have the last word, regardless the evil that ensues. We can have every right to be troubled, just as Jesus is troubled at the nature of sin and the darkness that surrounds us.

But we have no reason or excuse for us to be unknowing of where we can find peace that eases and calms our troubled souls.

[14:09] Because God promises to have the last word. When evil is pronounced, God pronounces victory as well for those who he loves.

And we see this section of passage continue with the disciples' uncertainty. We see that there is a sense of permission for evil.

As 22 continues all the way to verse 30. The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he spoke.

After the announcement of such betrayal, the sonic waves are still echoing. You can still see the paintings in the room or the decor in the room falling off of the walls.

And the disciples begin to become uncomfortable at the reality that one of the people surrounding that table, hanging out with them, is a betrayer.

[15:10] And it's interesting, if we kind of look at what John provides, it's an absolutely beautiful contrast from verse 23 through 26.

John takes this cosmological storm that is just swirling around at this moment.

And he directs, it's almost like, if you could, I got this Hollywood scene in my head. If you could just pause the blowing winds. The trees are all bent over in their paws.

And if you could pause that cosmological storm in the passage right now, John turns this direction of the narrative to a cosmological union with Jesus.

In verse 23 through 26, we see one of his disciples who Jesus loved. This is John referencing to himself.

[16:14] This is his beloved disciple. A great description of a relationship that somebody has with Jesus, in union with Jesus. Look at how they're sitting at the table.

The great detail that John provides. They're reclining. Their body language says that there is no danger anywhere. If you knew that there was a cross waiting ahead for you the next day, I guarantee the last thing you're probably going to be doing is chilling with your homeboys at a table.

You'd probably be going out and doing a lot of things that you wanted to do before the end of your life. If you want to be honest. But their body language says that there is peace. They're reclined at a table. And look at the relationship, the friendship in this union. Peter motions to John. If you can ever think of like a good friend that you have, sometimes you communicate. You come up with your own language with your closest friends that you don't even have to say a word. And they know exactly what you're saying. Look, Peter doesn't even speak to John. [ 17 : 23 ] You see this friendship between the two. He just motions to John to inquire. And look at John, sitting right next to Jesus. Leans over.

And I can imagine it was very close. Lean over probably upon his chest. And whispers and says, Who is it? Look at this proximity with Jesus for a moment.

And John notes that Jesus would call this person out by giving them a morsel of bread.

This was a historical symbol that would often act as a favor to the guest of honor at a dinner to do this very thing.

Jesus says that I will be giving a favor to the guest of honor. That is my betrayer. And Judas receives this morsel. And in so doing, breaks that union, that cosmological union, because his heart is already detached from it.

[ 18 : 30 ] And at this moment of identification, Satan's puppeteer, Judas, the guest of honor, is given the permission to be dismissed, to commit the greatest act of evil, the betrayal of the Son of God.

Boy. John provides for us so much detail to truly elaborate upon the union with Jesus and the disunion with Jesus.

John makes a contrasting reality, church. Judas becomes a model of this gospel for being an agent of disbelief. He's an agent of breaking away from Christian fellowship of any intimacy.

And he becomes an agent of Satan. All in contrast of what was previously developed within the cosmological union.

Yeah. In verse 27, then after he had taken the morsel, after Judas took the morsel of bread, Satan entered into him.

[ 19 : 43 ] Basically, to say plainly and simply, that his union was not with Jesus. That all of a sudden, Judas takes up Satan.

Judas allows Satan to enter into him. And Jesus said to him, What you are going to do. Do it quickly. Permission?

Really? What is so significant, church, about the fact that Jesus permits Judas to betray him? And this is so vitally important. Because even in his betrayal, Jesus is still in control of the timetable. By him not making any effort of resistance for the evil to transpire, this broadcasts that nothing occurring in this time frame, in this upper room, is occurring outside of his sovereign control, his sovereign promise.

[ 20 : 55 ] Remember John 10, 18, where Jesus said, No one takes my life from me, but I lay it down myself. Talk about putting your money where your mouth is.

Even in his betrayal, he's in control. This is the only time, also, that Satan, in the entire gospel of John, in all these chapters, that Satan is mentioned by name.

And this is important. Because at a social gathering, John has reserved this time to explain in detail Satan entering into somebody. Because within the context back then, social gatherings weren't just something you just kind of mindlessly did.

Social gatherings were sort of like a contractual engagement. That it was very intimate with affairs. You wouldn't just have a meal with just anybody.

This is why in Luke 15, verse 2, the Pharisees were all up in arms about Jesus sitting and eating with sinners. Because in their mind, this is meaning that Jesus was sinning along with them.

[ 22 : 04 ] There was a contractual nature within sharing food and having meals. And considering the scene of betrayal, I believe John is making it clear through highlighting all of this.

The explicit mention of Satan. The explicit mention of this dinner. That this is an interpretive aid to provide insight into the cultural nature of this scene.

That Judas wasn't simply betraying Jesus. Judas was breaching a contract. And he was making one with Satan.

This contractual offer stems back within the context of John. Back to Jesus being the bread of life. Where John 6, 35 details that, I am ego, I me.

I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me shall not hunger. And whoever believes in me shall never thirst again.

[ 23 : 12 ] What depths of darkness that consumed Judas' heart. His feet were squeaky clean. Just as all the other disciples who were around.

He was in close, very close proximity. Because he just simply took the morsel of bread. He was in close proximity with Jesus. But his heart was never cleansed.

Judas is lost. Never to return. But on whose timetable? Jesus is. If Judas and Satan are alike receiving permission.

If Judas is bound to Satan at this point. Even Satan is the servant of the king of kings. When you start wrapping your mind around that reality.

All of a sudden, this creates a sense of confidence in the face of evil. And look at the picture.

[ 24 : 19 ] I call it the picture in picture, the pip. I don't know if it's pip or whatever the TVs call it. It's kind of like creating like a scene within a scene. You see Judas take the morsel of bread.

And Jesus says, whatever you're going to do, go and do it quickly. And it's like that scene is paused. And at the other side. You see the disciples like, well, what's he going to be doing?

I guess we could assume the best. He's going to give the money that he has. The money back to the poor. He might get some more food for this feast. I mean, we're a little bit sparse. I know Jesus did the whole fish and loaves thing back in John 6.

But, you know, I don't know. We could use a cup of Coke here and maybe a couple utensils. But what happens is that there is confusion.

And it's like that paused Category 5 hurricane that's surrounded this upper room within the unseen realm. All of a sudden, it's put back into motion.

[ 25 : 19 ] And that scene of the cosmological union within this room and the storm around assumes its position.

And verse 30 says, and after receiving the morsel of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night. Verse 30 is sort of like a transitional marker and pushes the narrative towards the remaining 11 disciples as Jesus begins and gears up for his farewell discourse.

And ending such an act of betrayal, the drama ends with, it was night. If you're an imaginative thinker, this puts on like a big auditorium that's all lit up with the scene playing out and all of a sudden the house lights, the stage lights, everything goes black.

It was night. It's almost as if John is communicating to us through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, I don't even know what to make of this.

It was night. That the last great act of God in the flesh, Jesus Christ, was an act of love, of great honor, of favor to the guest of honor at this dinner.

[ 26 : 39 ] And this guest of honor has turned around and continued to do what he has devised in his mind and Satan has consumed his heart to do. What do we make of that next scene?

It is night. It's almost as if John was blown away as well. What else do we say? The very last act of Christ was love towards the unlovable.

A similar symbolic picture of the foot washing as well, which points both to the cross. This is the gospel church. That Jesus Christ suffered in our place to be substituted for a death that we deserve.

And he died. And he paid the penalty for our sin upon the cross so that we may be united with him. He gave the unworthy, the exact opposite of what we deserve.

That's exactly what he did in the foot washing. That's exactly what he did in this episode of the morsel of bread. As we wrap up our time today, I think it's appropriate to see the effects of peace that occur within this scene.

[ 28 : 13 ] Certainly, there's much for John to say regarding about being united with Jesus Christ and the peace that it naturally produces.

You know, this is why you got to put your arms around Jesus and go be with Jesus. You'll have peace. And I'll see you next week, right? But there's so much more. There's so much depth within this text of what it means to be truly united with the God of the universe.

The promise of this text teaches our hearts to be encouraged amid dark moments in our lives. The fact alone that Jesus allowed evil to befall him upon him according to his plan and his timeline, his control, can bring us confidence that when sin befalls us in this life, that nothing is occurring outside of the hand of God.

The children's song says it true. He's got the whole world in his hands. He does. And when you truly understand this within our lives, it's easy to affirm here being in a nice warm room among the church, but when you are outside, when something occurs within your life and the going gets tough, well, then these realities that God is storing within our hearts come to life, and he's saying, remember.

Remember my son. Remember my daughter. The fact alone that Jesus allowed this to befall him should bring us great confidence when sin befalls us.

[ 29 : 57 ] Jesus is sovereign over everything. Everything that has happened and everything that will happen in the future, even regarding his own betrayal.

I mean, isn't it laughable how even since the garden, Satan has been trying to usurp God in a variety of different ways, and he's like, oh, this is perfect time.

I am going to take out the son of God, and he's just falling into the trap that God had planned, which is the path of redemption. You say, you know, the saying is true.

You don't show up to a gunfight with a knife. Well, Satan essentially, in the reality of what's going on, he's showing up to a nuclear war with a disposable spoon.

He's not prepared for this. And what he's going to do is essentially hurt himself. You cannot take anything away from Jesus.

[ 31 : 07 ] And when we realize that Jesus never loses control over any event, that he's marching to the cross or marching away from the cross in his ascension, we realize just how deep the Father's love is for us.

A love that John indicates in verse 1 of chapter 13, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

A Greek word, to the end, telos, that was also similarly comparatively spoken at the cross when it was finished, that he is accomplishing something for who he loves.

And in this, we too can say as a church, where death is your sting, what can come against us?

What charge can be brought against us that can disunify us from the cosmological union that we have through our faith with Jesus Christ?

Nothing. Nothing. Nothing. On Jesus' cross, according to his timeline, he crushed the serpent's head. Jesus triumphs over Satan.

[ 32 : 21 ] The victory of the cross equips the church, us today, with supernatural peace in the face of evil, come what may. And even has the power to bring about supernatural joy in the darkness.

Can you imagine for a minute, not only just being able to have peace, but when all hell is storming around you, that God has given us, through the power of his Holy Spirit, the means of having not only peace, but having joy, when everything may be stripped away from us.

Where does this peace derive from? Where's the source of this peace? How on earth can we experience this peace today? It's knowing very personally that beyond a shadow of a doubt, Jesus has everything within his hands.

Through the pronouncement of evil that come, or through the permission that he allows evil to come in our lives. He has everything in his hands. Now that's where you find peace.

Colossians 1.17 says, He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And man, if Jesus is holding the cosmos together, when we're experiencing darkness in life, how could we ever doubt that he's also holding us together?

[ 33 : 49 ] Right? The doctor gives us a bad diagnosis that we did not want to hear, giving us a timeline that seems to be a surprise to us, is no surprise to the sovereign plans of God.

And we know that we have maybe a couple months, maybe a couple years to live. Or we have a good decision that in order to reverse what is ultimately going to be happening, we'd have to make a choice that whatever that diagnosis is, God is in control.

If your employer gives you that dreaded pink slip saying, you're done. And all of a sudden your family of six is looking around of, what are we going to do?

God has given you a peace. God has given you not only a peace, but a joy. When your kids that you've been training all through their lives, walk away and turn away from their faith, that you've been instilling within their hearts all throughout their lives, there is peace and joy that awaits.

And when you wake up filled with fear, anxiety, worry, and doubt, there is a great peace that surpasses all understanding that is available to you in Jesus Christ.

[ 35 : 07 ] In Jesus Christ, there is very little in this life that has the power to calm our affections. As Jesus' sovereignty powerfully, continuously stirs our confidence in his plans and timing in our lives, yes, even the perceivable evil when darkness falls.

You see, John 13 is a message that the world needs to hear, a message that the world needs to witness through how we emulate ourselves amid this darkness that surrounds us as well.

May the world attest to our peace, even in the most treacherous situations in life, resting that Jesus Christ is sovereign. And our action, our emulation of that attitude will similarly declare that Jesus Christ is in control.

And that is where we have peace. That is where we have joy. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray.