

# Love that Knows

John 13:18-30

<sup>18</sup>"I am not referring to all of you; I know those I have chosen. But this is to fulfill the scripture: 'He who shares my bread has lifted up his heel against me.'

<sup>19</sup>"I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that I am He.

<sup>20</sup>"I tell you the truth, whoever accepts anyone I send accepts me; and whoever accepts me accepts the one who sent me."

<sup>21</sup>After he had said this, Jesus was troubled in spirit and testified, "I tell you the truth, one of you is going to betray me."

<sup>22</sup>His disciples stared at one another, at a loss to know which of them he meant. <sup>23</sup>One of them, the disciple whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to him. <sup>24</sup>Simon Peter motioned to this disciple and said, "Ask him which one he means."

<sup>25</sup>Leaning back against Jesus, he asked him, "Lord, who is it?"

<sup>26</sup>Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish." Then, dipping the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, son of Simon. <sup>27</sup>As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him.

"What you are about to do, do quickly," Jesus told him, <sup>28</sup>but no one at the meal understood why Jesus said this to him. <sup>29</sup>Since Judas had charge of the money, some thought Jesus was telling him to buy what was needed for the Feast, or to give something to the poor. <sup>30</sup>As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night.

Did you ever wish you could read minds?

Wouldn't it be great guys, if we knew what she was thinking? Should I get her a toaster or a blender for her birthday? You tune in to her thoughts...oh...maybe she'd like some earrings instead. If I say this...is she going to be upset? Ladies: You're probably better at reading his mind than he wants to admit, but it would still be nice. Maybe he isn't really talking tonight so you tune in...oh...that's how I can get him out of his shell. It's one of the things that makes relationships so hard...not knowing what the other person is thinking. That goes for any relationship parents and children and between friends. But maybe sometimes we wouldn't want to know what is going on in another's mind. And we certainly wouldn't want someone else to know our every thought. We wouldn't feel safe, but ashamed. Does knowledge make love easier or harder? This also affects our relationship to God...God does know what we are thinking. He can read our minds. He knows exactly who we are and what we are doing. That's scary...that's wonderful. Let's go into the room on the Thursday of Holy Week with Jesus and the disciples and see that...Jesus knows those he loves.

We'll go through this section of the Bible and ask...First...What's going on between Jesus and Judas. And what does that have to do with us? Secondly: what's going on between Jesus and the rest of the disciples? And what does that have to do with us?

To most people Judas probably looked pretty good. He was the treasurer for the group so he had some responsibility. He seemed to be concerned about the poor. At this supper he may very well have been reclining on Jesus' left, which was a position of honor. But Jesus knows Judas better. He knows what he's doing. He knows that already at least a year ago the sin of greed had wormed its way into Judas. He knew that Judas stole from the money bags. He knew also that Judas had just recently gone to Jesus' enemies and agreed to betray Jesus to them for money. He thinks his plans are safely locked in his head. But Jesus knows...and it's obvious that he knows.

- Jesus tells him that the blessings of service don't apply to him (v18)
- He tells him that he "knows those he has chosen" (v18) Judas' ears probably perk up at this.
- Scripture will be fulfilled...one who eats my bread...lifts up his heel against me. Judas knew his scriptures...he probably knew that Jesus was quoting from Psalm 41. A Psalm David wrote when he

experienced a betrayal. One of his trusted advisors went to help out Absalom who rebelled against David. (one who shares bread = really close relationship...you don't eat with your enemies. Lift up heel against me = picture of a horse that you care for and feed, but it kicks you anyway. ) Judas knew his scripture...he may be thinking...does Jesus know its me?

- I tell you the truth (what a sad, but important truth!)...one of *you* will betray me...one of "you" Jesus narrows it down to the 12. One who saw his miracles. One that he taught face to face. Judas is all ears at this point.
- Jesus hands Judas the bread dipped in the sauce to indicate that he is the one, to let Judas know...that Jesus knows!

Isn't it easy for us to look at Judas and say "C'mon Judas" what are you thinking?! Jesus is God. You saw his miracles! Did you really think you could pull a fast one? But maybe we should look into the mirror instead. We have a little Judas inside us—a sinful nature that is completely opposed to Jesus, that doesn't love him and that thinks we can hide from him. We think sin is a private matter. It's nobody else's business. It might change our life if we could see Jesus sitting next to us all the time...yet he is! He's there in our car, when we're driving along on the highway frustrated (maybe a little road rage?) at the other drivers...he's there in our office or workplace when we are wasting time at work. He's listening in on our thoughts. He's sitting on our couch when our family is arguing and hurting one another. He's there. Judas thought he could hide his heart. We think we can too. And when we're caught in a sin—we're quick to deny it.

Our denying sin reminds me of a little kid with Cheeto crumbs all over his mouth, his white shirt, his fingers. His father shows him the mess of Cheetos in the living room and says "do you know anything about this mess?" He says "nope". That's how obvious our sins are to Jesus. Why do we deny them? He sees them all over our face, our fingers are smudged with them, they're all over our heart, all over our mind—we can't hide them. So let's be honest with him. That's hard. How many of us would pull into the police station...walk in and say "Write me ticket. I was going 10 over on I45" It may seem odd, but we can do that with Jesus. We can admit what we've done wrong. In fact we *need* to admit it and confess to him. Sin is dangerous and he's the only one who can deal with it. And he invites us to repent and turn to him because he loves us. He still loved Judas...

Look at verse 21, Jesus is troubled in spirit, he's all stirred up inside. We might think...of course he's troubled, he's about to be betrayed, tortured, killed. But that's not the main reason Jesus is troubled. He's troubled about Judas. How many of us...if we found out that our best friend secretly hated us and is planning to humiliate us publicly... we'd focus on our own hurt. How wronged *we* are. Jesus doesn't. Jesus focuses on Judas' hurt—his endangered soul. That's Jesus loving perfectly for us...the way we haven't.

He still loves Judas...he knows him, and knows the best way to talk to him, plead with him to wake up and realize what he is doing to himself. Jesus could have just said "one of you is going to betray me" and "by the way, it's Judas, he's right here. Ok, the rest of you, beat him up." But he doesn't do that, does he? No, all of Jesus' actions and words are meant just for Judas. All of Jesus' actions and words are crying out "Turn around you're on the wrong path" "I still love you! I want to help you!" He wanted Judas to say "You're right Jesus, I'm so sorry! Fix me!"

Our hidden sins trouble Jesus too. He wants us to repent, to bring our filthy thoughts, our lies our broken relationships and present them to him. When we approach Jesus we don't come to him with anything we've earned... with our hands full of all the good things we did this week. We try to do that sometimes don't we? Well, I went to church 5 times this month! I go to bible class faithfully! No...Jesus doesn't want us to come before him pretending we're good. If we have anything in our hands its broken things...it's our sins. Here Jesus, here is my broken relationship, please fix it! Yes I doubted you this week. Remember how I hurt her with my sinful pride...please take it away Jesus. What does he do? He takes them in his nail-pierced hands. He washes us clean. He says...I lived and died in your place. I took care of it. Now go and leave your life of sin and live your life of service in my grace. While we were still sinners Christ died for us.

How sad that Judas wasn't sorry. When Jesus hands him the bread, he takes it. Basically he's saying, "You're right Jesus, it's me! And I'm going to do it!" Then we read the chilling words...Satan entered Judas...that's dark.... that's a warning for us not to play with our sins. That's a warning not to pamper our pet sins, but kick them out...give them to Jesus...Jesus I keep doing this...please forgive me, help me stop. Judas shut the door in Jesus' face, in Jesus' constant love...because the sin of greed had taken over him...and when someone keeps shutting the door in the face of Jesus' love the back door pops open and evil rushes in and takes control. There's no middle ground here. What a warning for us.

Jesus knows those he loves. He knew Judas and he still loved him...but it also goes for the rest of the disciples. Let's take a step back and ask, "What is going on between the other disciples and Jesus?" The other disciples were sinners too. They still loved Jesus, they still believed in Jesus.

Jesus knows what they need...his words now that predict his betrayal...they need these words. "I tell you now before it happens so when it happens you will believe that I am He." Imagine if Jesus hadn't said this? What would his disciples have thought later on...would they have doubted that He was true God? Didn't Jesus know he was going to be betrayed...or did Judas surprise him? Later on it's going to appear like the world is falling apart. The disciples are going to be shaken to the very depths of their faith. Their teacher, Lord, friend...betrayed? Mocked? Tortured? Dead and in a tomb? Later, after the fact... the disciples can say "Oh!" He knew that would happen, he let it happen...and he did it all for us!

Another way Jesus loves his disciples and knows what they need is in v. 27. Jesus says to Judas "What you are about to do, do it quickly." In the original language Jesus says "do it quicker, sooner than you were intending." It's according to *his* timetable...not Judas' and not the Jews/Pharisees/religious leaders who are primed to kill him. Men have their plans but God's plan rules over them all. It could be that they were planning on dealing with Jesus after the Passover festival. But the Passover festival was pointing ahead to this very moment, when Jesus would die for the sins of the world. Jesus wanted to die during the Passover. Jesus tells Judas to betray him sooner! Judas must have been fuming when he left...I've been found out...he wants it done quick!...I'll do it super quick! I'll do it tonight! And he did. And that's exactly what Jesus wanted. He's in control of the evil in our lives too!

We see another way that Jesus knows what his disciples need and loves them. Just after this story as Jesus begins to say "goodbye" to his disciples he tells them...where I am going, you cannot come. What a relief that is isn't it? Peter thought he could follow Jesus too...later he says that he wants to go where Jesus is going and come through it with him. No. Jesus was stepping into the huge canyon, the mind-boggling gulf between God and man. He's about to experience the wrath of God over every sin committed by every single sinner that ever lived and ever will live...and he'll experience all of that condensed into a matter of hours. What a relief that we can't go there. Jesus did. He knew us, he knew what we needed and he loved us enough to do it for us.

It might be fun for us to read each other's minds. But maybe God has a reason why we can't. Imagine how hard it would be to forgive each other if that were the case. Imagine what sin would do with that knowledge! But we remember that God reads minds and hearts. He sees all our sins. He takes care of all our sins in the sacrifice of his son. That's his love. Love that knows. Love that acts and saves us.

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