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Thursday 09 April, 2020

## REFLECTION

Luke 22 provides great detail of the Passover meal: who was to prepare it, where they will celebrate the Passover and Jesus' statements about two main elements of bread and wine. The Passover was soon to become the **Crossover**, when Jesus gave the 12 Disciples (Judas was still present at the table) instructions from the original "Passover" - unleavened bread being nourishment for the journey (but now do this in memory of My broken body, whenever you gather and break bread), and the blood of the lamb who sacrificed his life, which marked them safe from the reaper's wrath (now wine/juice signifying *a new Covenant between God and His people, an agreement confirmed with My blood, poured out for you* (Luke 22).

While a shared meal is quite intimate, John's account of the day before Jesus crucifixion, starts, *Before the Passover celebrations...*(13:1) and provides significant detail about the conversation they had over the meal. If you have a Bible in which Jesus' words are printed in red, chapters 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 are mostly in red!

Before we delve into these five chapters, note that John summarises in 13:1-3, Jesus' "*Great Priestly Prayer*" (quite literally, the Lord's Prayer) found in chapter 17. These two are

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like bookends, holding together the around-the-table conversation in the intervening chapters.

We have the privilege of 20/20 vision to discover, this dinner-time conversation is in two parts. In the first part (13:4-38), Jesus declares, *God knows what is going to happen. He is **NOT GOING TO MAKE IT HAPPEN**, because that would betray God's character.* God is not a Master Puppeteer making us do things according to His will and plan.

Jesus reveals a Truth: *An unrepentant spirit in a Christian community, is a pawn in satan's hand.* A person who does not recognise their character flaws, and leaves them unconfessed, plays into satan's schemes and plans.

Judas did not recognise his obsession with money was eating into his understanding of God, and he became a pawn in satan's plan. Jesus said to him, *Hurry and do what you have to do* (what you have committed yourself to do).

In the most intimate time together, that of sharing a meal, Judas was unrepentant, and was blinded to Truth.

Every Disciples around the table had character flaws, but Jesus also had to deal with Peter's character flaw before he took up the mantle to be the *“rock on which (Jesus) would build*

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*His Church”, to be the solidly dependable person whom Jesus would trust to build His Church.*

Peter's character flaw? Committing himself to do God's work for Him or even better, with Him! *Don't aspire to go with Jesus where God has planned for him to go. That is Jesus journey. You Peter have your own, and you need to shaped up for it.* Twelve hours later, Peter broke down and repented, and Jesus restored him to the role God desired for him. The book of Acts of the Apostles (or better still, the ***Acts of the Holy Spirit***) is a testimony of this lesson Peter had to learn, before he stood up and gave the inaugural address at the first global convention of the Church in Jerusalem, at Pentecost!

The problem with the human spirit is that it is still tied to the first temptation (Genesis 3): ... *and you shall be **LIKE** God.*

The second part of this dinnertime discourse, is Jesus' assurance to a group of men who did not understand what was about to happen (16:17-18). To them Jesus says:

- *I am the Way, the Truth and the Life (eternal). No one comes to the Father except through me - i.e., follow me and you are on the road to encounter the Father (14:1-14)*

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- I am the real vine - remain attached to me, draw nourishment from me and you will bear much fruit, here and now- that is your witness.
- The Father will give you the Holy Spirit who will guide you into all Truth. He will not speak His own mind, but only that which He has heard from the Father.
- I will not be away for long, but I WILL return in My Father's glory.

Jesus invites us into a new order of life. No more Temple sacrifice (He is the final sacrifice who "buys" our sinful selves), no more Temple High Priest, because Jesus is the High Priest who does not have to prepare Himself to enter into God's presence, and no more prescribed Temple worship, because God can now be worshipped in Spirit and in Truth!

As we saw in Judas and Peter, a person with an unrepentant spirit, a person with an unconfessed character flaw, living and working in a Christian community (a Church), becomes a pawn in satan's hand, sold to sin and blinded to Truth.

**PRAYER:** Father, reveal to me my character flaw(s) and teach me to repent of it. Then wash and cleanse me for your service.

**AMEN.**