

John Chapter 13 v 1 - 14

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[0 : 00] and into the Gospel record of John, chapter 13. John, chapter 13. We're going to start reading from the first verse.

This is the Word of God. The Lord Jesus and his disciples are in the upper room, not long before his execution.

It was just before the Passover feast, Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.

The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God.

So he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

[1 : 30] He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, Lord, are you going to wash my feet? Jesus replied, you do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand.

No, said Peter, you shall never wash my feet. Jesus answered, unless I wash you, you have no part with me.

Then, Lord, said Peter, not just my feet, but my hands and my head as well. Jesus answered, a person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet.

His whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you. For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said, not every one of you was clean.

When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. Do you understand what I have done for you? He asked them. You call me teacher and Lord, and rightly so, for that is what I am.

[2 : 50] Now that I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.

I tell you the truth. No servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

Let me go. Let us pray. We thank you, Lord, that men, women, and young people, and children are still being converted, brought to faith in Jesus Christ.

and be glad, Lord, when your church grows. Men and women and young people and children are growing in the faith, learning more and more about you and your son and the wonderful secret workings of the Holy Spirit.

And Lord, as we think of your Holy Spirit, Lord, we ask that he might be very, very active in this town.

[4 : 29] Please. There's so much in this town that is dark. so much, Lord, need, as in many, many of our towns.

So many people bewildered and not knowing what life is all about. We really need you, Lord, please, to keep on touching lives, to keep on changing lives.

We do our work of evangelism, Lord. We try to speak to others and we try to engage others to share with them your amazing love.

But unless you are at work, Lord, our words fall to the ground. And they're met by stony hearts.

Please, in the name of Jesus Christ, visit this town again. Visit our land again, Lord.

[5 : 51] We've been so blessed in years gone by and yet we've fallen as a nation so far away. And our society is further from you and your truth than it has ever been.

Or so it seems to us. Have mercy. Please. Again. And we'll be careful, dear God, to give you all the praise and all the credit.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Have you ever heard anyone say, I don't know who I am?

I came across this about 30 years ago. I had the opportunity to go back to university and do a little bit of reviving understanding of counseling and clinical psychology and I was just doing it for a couple of days a week, just for a year.

And this kept coming up over and over again. I don't know who I am. And it wasn't just the people who were clients to the counselors. It was the counselors themselves that didn't seem to know.

[7 : 22] Have you ever come across it or is it something that only happened down in the Midlands? Eh? Well, you just think about it.

I mean, if somebody asked you, do you know who you are? Would you be able to say, yeah, I know who I am? And you give your name and address where you were born and where you live in.

Would you? That would be my sort of reaction or what would in those days. What would someone mean by saying, I don't know who I am.

Who am I? I guess what they would be saying really in effect was it's like a shorthand of three other questions.

Where have I come from? Why am I here? Where am I going? That's more like what people talk about now, isn't it? I don't know where I've come from, although they might have listened to so many programs on the television or radio or read so many articles in newspapers that they've been thoroughly, thoroughly brainwashed into thinking they've developed from animals and further back than that, slime in a pond somewhere.

[8 : 48] Why am I here? Well, that's that's a regular one, isn't it? Why am I here? And then where am I going?

It's amazing how many people now when they think about where am I going they think, well, I'll just die and that'll be it. That'll be the end of me. Gone. Gone. So let's give some thought to this.

Origin, purpose, destination. Where do we come from? Why are we here? Where are we going? Personal identity.

Knowing who we are. Some years ago I was struck by it was rather a lot of years because it was when things were in black and white on telly.

So you can tell I'm old. I saw on the television a picture of Her Majesty the Queen and she was just inspecting her horses and you know it was a real surprise to see her there with the horse and she had a head scarf on fastened round her neck and you could have I could have just imagined me mum looking like that hanging up the washing on the back and I thought that's Her Majesty that's the Queen of England that's the one who has such an important role in this in this land and carries it off with such dignity such poise such sense of duty how come she could put a head scarf round her head and look like that it's because she is very comfortable in her own personal identity she is very comfortable as to who she is and you can tell people who are comfortable in what they do because they they don't try to impress anybody they don't try to conform with others they just are themselves and they look comfortable

[11 : 31] Queen of England examining her horses looking as though she's hanging going to hang out the washing it's a wonderful credit to her she's comfortable in who she is now what has that got to do with our reading a little earlier what has that to do with Jesus Christ well it has quite a lot if you just open your Bible if you have one there to John chapter 13 the reading that we had and then verse 3 Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power he knew his purpose he knew why he was here he knew what he had to do he knew his job and that he had come from

God he knew his origins where he'd come from and was returning to God he knew where he was going he knew his origin purpose and destination it's there in that verse and then notice what he does this is the creator co-creator with God the Father so it is recorded to us and revealed for us this man is co-creator of everything that exists everything that you can see that's tiny and minute and everything that you can see out there in space and everything that you can't see that's out there he created it all this man and yet he's about to take up a towel take his jacket off or the eastern equivalent wrap that towel around his middle and get a bowl and put some water in it and come and kneel kneel in front of his disciples and wash their feet this is the

Lord of glory the only begotten son of God and he's kneeling and washing their feet is it remarkable he doesn't mind people misunderstanding him he doesn't get upset because they don't grasp immediately who he is he's comfortable in himself he knows who he is he knows where he's come from he knows why he's here and he knows where he's going he knows his origin he knows his purpose and he knows his destination and he can do what normally one of the servants would do maybe we just explain that a little bit you notice that Peter when he gets to Peter he says you will not wash my feet you can understand him saying that can't you he has such a high regard for

Jesus such respect he believes him to be the Christ the son of God knows him to be the Christ the son of God you won't wash my feet and Jesus says but if I don't wash your feet you're not clean oh my head then my head and my hands everything typical Peter isn't it he's got that kind of personality in there bang jumps in wish God would give us some more of those in the church get on with it even if they make some mistakes if you don't want to make any mistakes in church life then you'll have to do nothing and that seems to be the decision a lot of church people have made I'm not going to make any mistakes so I'm not going to do anything we've got to be prepared to make mistakes Peter was one who was in there he's got a heart for God and he was passionate and he loved the Lord Jesus Christ and he just comes out with it but Jesus says but if I don't wash your feet you won't be clean oh my head my hands oh but he was bathed he's only to wash his feet what does he mean he's speaking in symbols and metaphors using words to describe something spiritual if we have come to the

Lord Jesus and confessed our wrongdoing and offence to God and our sins and God has forgiven us we are children of God but we're still living in an evil world and we've still got the old nature sometimes a lot of the old nature still there and it's likened to walking through the streets see when they went to a supper they would usually get a real good bath put some clean clothes on and then they'd walk through the streets to where the feast was going to be held and when they walked there even though they'd had a bath and were really clean when they set off their feet would be dirty they'd be dusty open sandals and so consequently a servant would be there at the door and would sit them down and wash their feet and as soon as you wash your feet in those circumstances you clean all over so what he's saying is that you in life we love the Lord

[17 : 41] Jesus Christ in life we make mistakes we still blunder and we still fail when we do go straight to Jesus and confess it apologize repent say sorry and he cleans us keeps us clean so in the Lord Jesus we're not only one saviour a wonderful lovely saviour who forgives us and cleanses us in the first place but he's the one who keeps us clean by daily walking with him and keeping in contact with him but back to this origin purpose destination time and again Jesus said I've come from the father I've come to do the father's will I've come from heaven on one occasion he said to the

Jews quite specifically you don't know where I've come from and you don't know where I'm going I've come from heaven it's quite amazing really that the Lord Jesus Christ the son of God became a real human being have you ever thought about that what that meant for you to be born a helpless baby helpless there is a hymn isn't there Jesus Christ meek and mild no crying he makes it says in that hymn that is not can't possibly be true it was a real baby and real babies cry unless they have quite a serious problem they cry and Jesus cried and there is the

Lord of glory a baby a helpless baby he's got to be fed he's got to be changed he's got to be taught how to speak it's quite amazing that God the son should go to that extent to come here into this world what an amazing love to come from God to become a human being and so time and again he's reminding people as you read through the account of his ministry he's reminding people he came from heaven came from the father his origin he knew and what about his purpose why he'd come well we have a record here in this inspired book that talks about an event that happened when he was 12 years old a boy of 12 the family had gone down lots of other folk no doubt from

Galilee from the northern section of Israel travelled down by foot down to Jerusalem to celebrate one of the feasts and you know what it's like when you're in your crowd and you've got extended family a 12 year old it can be with any members of your family with uncles aunts you don't worry or anxious until on the way back you can just imagine mum or dad saying where's Jesus have you seen him he ought to be here to sleep now tonight they discover he isn't there so they have to go back travelling another day next journey back to Jerusalem to look for him and eventually they come across him they find him he's in the temple talking to the the folk in the temple the priests

Pharisees they'll be talking about and he's talking about the things of God and when his mum says to him didn't you think we'd be worrying about you he said well didn't you realise it'd be about my father's business I'd be in my father's house among my father's business didn't you know where I'd be 12 year olds they were treated like adults and he was there talking about his purpose in Hebrews chapter 10 that's a lovely coincidence isn't it that that's up there Hebrews chapter 10 the writer to the Hebrews quotes from Psalm 40 and says a body you have prepared for me lo behold I come to do your will oh God in the volume of the book it is written of me what he's saying there is

[22 : 57] I've come to do your will heavenly father that was a prophecy in Psalm 40 Christ says when he comes into the world said the writers of the Hebrews father I've come to do your will you've prepared a body for me so that I can do it the volume of the book in the volume of the book he means in the Old Testament and my aren't there some wonderful promises and prophecies there there are 300 or more prophecies connected with the Lord Jesus Christ wonderful sometimes very detailed prophecies the Messiah must be born who his race should be the sort of person he would be the kind of events that would happen his crucifixion is recorded there in prophecy how he's going to be treated the miracles he's going to be performed you can go through all the major issues concerning the person and work of

Jesus Christ and they're all prophesied in the Old Testament scriptures in the volume of the book it is written of me lo behold I come to do your will oh God so he knew he knew from the moment he left heaven he knew he was going to live a life as an ordinary human being for some 30 years almost in obscurity inconspicuously raised in the northern section of Israel Galilee and then at 30 as Luke tells us it was about 30 that he turned away from his joinery tools and he began his ministry traveling throughout Judea in the south and Galilee in the north traveling and healing wonderful healing miracles that Jesus the Christ was able to perform those miracles were a testimony to who he is the Messiah the promised

Messiah and you can check the prophecies with the actual recording of some of the life of the Lord Jesus and you can see how beautifully it fulfills because this was God's way of saying you'll recognize him and you can be sure who he is when he lives like this and does this and is able to perform miracles but that wasn't the main purpose for his coming he came to lay down his life he came to face the hostility of the religious leaders of the time who hated him sad to say hated him they hated him because he spoke of a heart religion his understanding and meaning of life is to work inside out change the heart and the life begins to get sorted that was his method and is still his method and they didn't like his emphasis on heart and ultimately after three years of ministry he was arrested charged with false charges sentenced on the basis of false charges natural fact the only thing that they condemned him for was that he said he was the son of God but that wasn't against the law it was if he's wrong he's wrong it's not a crime how could he say otherwise when

Caiaphas says to him are you the son of God you have said rightly he can't deny it when he is and that was the ground upon which they crucified him contrary to Jewish justice and contrary to Roman justice they crucified him but God had a greater plan it was all as he had anticipated when Jesus Christ was crucified he went through the horrific experience of being pierced in his hands and feet and hung up in the sun pinned to wood an excruciating the very word excruciating comes from the Latin of crucifixion a barbaric death but it wasn't just the experience of crucifixion that was the burden for Jesus he was treated by heavenly father who loved him beyond words he was treated by heavenly father whom he loved beyond words as though he was guilty of every wrong that his people had done from the beginning of time to the end every sin every offense everything thing that offended

God treated as though he had done them all he had said all the horrible rotten things that we and many others like us have said that he was treated as though he had done every vile act and thought every vile thing and punished as though he had done it although the testimony is clear he had done nothing ever to offend God in word action or thought he was entirely good entirely right from the moment of his birth to the day of his death and he said in effect father punish me in place of them in their place so that they can be given a free pardon it's phenomenal isn't it it's just absolutely staggering he knew why he had come and he knew where he was going he was going back to the father he was going back to heaven he told his disciples in the upper room recorded in

[30 : 07] John chapter 16 and verse 8 when the Holy Spirit comes says Jesus he will convict the world of sin righteousness and judgment of sin because they haven't believed in me that's the worst of all sins did you know as far as God is concerned the worst conceivable sin the worst imaginable sin that any human being can perform old or young is not to believe in Jesus Christ because it's God's beautiful costly provision for forgiveness and all the other horrible things pale against rejecting him and saying to God I'm not interested Jesus says the Holy Spirit will convict people of sin because they have not believed in me of righteousness because I go to the Father

I'm going home people are treating me as though I'm a criminal people are dishonouring me people are saying all horrible things as I'm going to approach Calvary and suffer and die but I'm going back to God my Father and he will welcome me home and of judgment because the ruler of this world is cast down there's a judgment to come so Jesus knew where he come from why he was here and where he was going but what has that got to do with you and me what's the relevance of it do you know where you've come from do you know your real origins are you being hoodwinked by the brainwashing that's being done the systematic brainwashing that is being done through the media to try and convince us that there were no better than animals tell human beings that they're just developments of animals and they get the message sooner or later and start behaving like animals isn't that where we are for the mass of the people no conscience about what they do no sensitivity to other human beings self interest even the advertising you're worth it we are obnoxious to God until we come to

Jesus and when we pour out our hearts to him and ask for his forgiveness we are transformed from one extreme to another from being obnoxious we become beautiful his delight that's the gospel God looks at us and he doesn't see all the things that we've done wrong he sees his own sons work in us and for us and we're beautiful and he delights in us and he's begun a work by his Holy Spirit to transform us so that we become beautiful within ourselves entirely that's his work to pronounce us declare us and then to work it in through us and make us into the people he wants us to be where have we come from

God has created us in the beginning God created man male and female he created he created them male and female in his own likeness and image and his purpose for us what is our purpose to glorify him he's our great God our great creator and he's wonderful he's worthy of every bit of praise and gratitude that we can shower upon him and more he loves us so much as his son loves us so much as to come on such a mission knowing full well what's going to happen to him he comes and he goes through it all out of great love for people like you and me what a

God and what a saviour and our purpose is to glorify him but what does it mean to glorify him well that's how the shorter catechism puts it and I think they put it beautifully they say what is the chief end what is the main purpose of human life to glorify God and enjoy him forever they've got it bang on to glorify God and to enjoy him God doesn't want a load of miserable followers it's not a kill joy I know sometimes we Christians we all love the Lord Jesus Christ don't give the impression that it's joyful but you know the world is right in one thing when they say is as miserable as sin because misery and sin belong together but holiness and happiness belong together and the Lord Jesus Christ in another of his prophecies this time from Psalm 16 and verse 10 he says to the father in your presence is fullness of joy at your right hand pleasures forevermore when we are with

[36 : 28] God in the new world brothers and sisters it's going to be a fantastic place we're really going to enjoy ourselves we're not going to be all straight laced and miserable God loves clean joy holy joy and it's right there is such a thing as holy joy and holy pleasure we experience it sometimes now in this world don't we holy joy holy pleasure clean godly brothers and sisters having fun together in a holy way in a clean handsome way but in God's presence fullness of joy and in Hebrews chapter chapter 12 verse 2 it tells us that the Lord Jesus Christ for the joy that was set before him get him back home to be with the father for the joy that was set before him he endured the cross despising the shame and he's now seated at the right hand of God the father he's home and no doubt when he arrived back in heaven he had such a welcome well done my good and faithful son how do we glorify

God by loving him we glorify God love the Lord your God with all your heart and mind soul and strength that's use your mind in a way that will glorify God love him so much that you will only think upon those things which are wholesome and good that he approves of use your heart and your affections only in the way that God declares because it's your route to happiness and it's your route to peace love God with all your heart your mind your soul your strength use your body and all your attributes and all your facilities to glorify God to please him live for him it doesn't mean that you've all got to be being religious you don't all have to go into the ministry you don't have to be evangelist you don't have to be missionaries it's not that it's living your life an ordinary life in the area where God has placed you and doing it for his glory in the factory in the shop in the neighborhood in the hospital doing it for his glory living out your life loving him and honoring him so it's loving God to glorify

God secondly it's to worship to be at worship look forward to seeing you all back here tonight I'm sorry you were told that I was here for four weeks and I shall know when the congregation was just two or three and it's my wife and the friends worship worship is very very important to be with God's people honoring and worshipping God and thirdly service we've all all who love the Lord Jesus have got a job to do for him a special job that only you can do and it's finding that job or jobs that's part of the purpose of being in the church help each other to find our niche find our contribution find our gift find our place to work for God in the church and from the church going to your elders and deacons and saying what have you got me

I can do I've got experience in this this this this this and I think I could do that and that and with a bit of help I could do this and that is there anything I can do for you anything I can do for the church wouldn't it be wonderful if the deacons were inundated with people volunteering I'll do that I can do that according to the scriptures every believer has a ministry for the benefit of the church everyone so we know our purpose to glorify God love worship service then finally and briefly where are we going well there are two choices and the choice is yours there's a lovely future not spoken of in any great detail really but just enough to wet the appetite a new world is going to be created out of this old one it's going to be transformed all that's bad and twisted and horrible is just going to be shifted gone and it's going to be back to its beauty and glory as created and then the people who there will all of them love God every one of them will love God you'll be walking down the street and everybody you meet will love you and you'll love them and you won't have any locks on any doors

I don't suppose we'll have houses like we've got them now who knows we don't know it's going to be absolutely mind-blowing heaven the most important thing is we'll be with the Lord Jesus Christ and all those who love him and have loved him and who are yet going to love him and then there's the other place separated from God and everything that's lovely and decent under the sense of God's judgment for that never-ending eternity in front of us hell who would ever want to go there who in their right minds would want to choose that well you don't need to choose it but you'll get there if you don't choose Jesus oh heavenly father how we thank you for the Lord Jesus we thank you for his lovely wonderful example and we ask father that you would help each believer present to learn from him more and more as they do their own reading of your word and as they gather together to hear the teaching of your word

[43 : 19] Lord that we might each grow more and more in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ we love you we love him please Lord grant your Holy Spirit to work in us and Lord touch the lives of those who are not yet safe in Jesus please in his holy and precious name Amen