

ADVENT ORDINATION 2016. The Rt. Rev. Dr. JBN Zhumbes.

TEXT: JOHN 13:1-17

TOPIC: THE PASSEOVER, HUMILITY, JESUS' WASH AND SERVICE IN THE KINGDOM.

Subtopics:

1. Never Let the Passover Pass-by-v 1
2. You Need the Glory of Humility-vs 2-5
3. Rejecting Jesus' Wash Leaves and Keeps You Out-vs 6-11
4. Devout Service Models Service And Secures Your
Position-vs 12-17

1. Never Let The Passover Pass-by-v 1

At the very first Passover, the time was up and God showed the full extent of his love to his children the Hebrews. He had, using the blood of animals, marked them out for protection and deliverance from slavery. They were indeed protected and delivered through his mighty hands. At this Passover feast, by John's record, Jesus knew his time was up and therefore to those he had loved, he needed to show the full extent of his love. He needed to demonstrate to them what matters most-love. Life for you as a Christian then, should be laced with Passover over acts-last like love acts. It should be especially so for you who are called to holy orders-men in cassock and collar. Serve exercising your pastoral duties as if your time were up. Be restless about it. Seek out the lost, protect the weak and vulnerable, wash, bath and clean the dirty, sin stained and sin scorched. Everyday, within the best of your ability, serve as if it were your last. For last acts like last words leave a lasting impression on the beneficiaries. Are you living in the consciousness of a daily Passover? Are you deliberate about what acts to act out to bless lives everyday day? Do you live in the knowledge that your times are in God's hand? Have you imbibed and own the principle that the righteous acts that you must do, you must not withhold?

Jesus our model did not procrastinate but swiftly acted out. You then, dare not procrastinate but act on, so long as such an act is good, life saving and life giving. Never let the Passover Pass-by. Take advantage of it to touch some life to the glory of God. Jesus said he was raising the stake of service through a demonstration of practical love. This, He said He was modelling for the disciples to imbibe-wash one another's feet. And He left them with a foot for thought, "Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them." The knowledge of these things have gone pass the disciples of old to us. And the need for blessing is the need of every sane person. If then in our Christian life, we do these things, the Lord will bless us. The New Year therefore, comes to us with a great challenge as Christians, to like our master, show the full extent of our love to a humanity littered around us, downtrodden and starved of love. Have you shown shown to somebody-some downtrodden this Christmas? Are you purposed to show love to someone this New Year? Remember that the last act that will last with someone if that were your last, is the act of love. That is what Jesus left with you and I and that should be the one act dominant on our hearts as his follows.

2. Empty Yourself And Wear the Glory of Humility-vs 2-9

It was dinner time and the evening meal was being served. But while the real meal was being served, Judas had been served the meal of betrayal by the devil and set to betray Jesus. And while others may have been hungry and longing for food and Judas had been prompted to act odd, Jesus was thinking of service and particularly the cleanness of his apostles. He was not doing this as someone who did know his

worth, but one who was in the full knowledge of the fact that the Father has had all things put under his power and sure of the fact that he is going back to God from where he had come. This, all in-view of the fact that his time was up. Just as he had given up the glory of heaven to come to earth, so He had given up the meal for service-washing of the feet of the disciples. He had found the dress he had on not fitting this service, had undressed-removing his outer garment and wrapped a towel round his waist, he poured water in a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet. He did not only wash them, but went beyond washing them to drying them up with the towel. The preparation for service by Jesus, was progressive. He would not hold on to power or authority though the Father had bestowed all of that on him. He was in charge, but would not let that go up his head. He would not let food-his appetite rob him of the opportunity to serve, rather, he gave up his meal to attend to the more pressing need of soul cleansing. His seamless garment-one of its kind would have been the hinderance, he gave that up to replacement with a towel round his waist. He who came to serve, proved that by himself pouring water into a basin and washing the feet of his disciples. To serve God in humanity, you have to let go and empty yourself of everything that is to your gain or the pain that may hinder. You need to empty yourself of all, that you may wear the glory of humility. You will have to throw away three Ps-power, position and pride. You will need to remove the garment of dignity and put on the apron of humility and of menial service. For the kind of garment you wear gives your job description. The right garment then, gives you an identity. And much more than identity, it gives you agility-enables you to serve, enables you to move with quick precision or easy grace and not with a struggling, difficult and graceless disposition. It makes you a person of more resourceful and adaptable nature and character.

In this text however, where we also have a contrasting resourceful and adaptable character, we see two scenes rolling out: while Jesus was planning to show love in its full extent, Judas was plotting to show hatred in its full extent. While Jesus was set to pour himself out to better other lives, Judas was scheming to trade Jesus out for personal benefit. While Jesus dressed for service, Judas dressed for disservice-betrayal. Forbid it that someone here is either toeing or set to toe the path of Judas-plotting hatred, scheming to turn the gospel into merchandise for self benefits or is dressed-plain dress or in cassock and collar for betrayal. Note people of God that every betrayal or denial of Jesus on earth, is a betrayal or denial of your place with him in eternity. What are you doing with Jesus and for Jesus? Or what are you doing against Jesus? What secret plots are you up to? Mark you, there is nothing about you and me hidden from the Lord and to the Lord.

3. Rejecting Jesus' Wash Keeps You Out-vs 6-11

Jesus had set out to give all and not some of the disciples this last but most important wash, and this act demonstration of the full extent of his love. It seems as if He must have washed all else and now it is Peter's turn to be washed. But Peter not knowing what Jesus was up to, attempted to stop him, saying "Lord are you going to wash my feet?" Replying Jesus said to Peter, "You do not realise what I am doing, but later you will understand." Peter had yet still insisted saying, "No, you shall never wash my feet." Then came the jaw breaking comment from Jesus, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

Ordinary bath makes you clean and physically healthy. The healthy and physically fit bath themselves. The sick however are bathed by others. And it is only he who bathes the sick that knows how clean they are. Jesus and the disciples had trekked a long way to the Upper Room, the place set apart for their dinner. Their feet therefore had been dirty and needed a wash. No one was as competent as He who is the the cleanest of beings-even Jesus Christ to wash. The booking of the Upper Room under normal circumstance, should go with the booking of a servant-a attain to a traditional Jewish requirement-the washing of the feet of guests. And this though will seem an oversight, was a divine omission. Any other hand touching these feet would have amounted to a desecration and a denial of the most desired lesson of the moment-love in humility, the one act that was never to be repeated anywhere in the gospels during Jesus' earthly ministry. This was needful as the disciples were already being obsessed with the craze and crave for greatness and position. This also is the disease of the ordained ministry today.

Divine bath however goes beyond physical to spiritual cleansing and the administration of spiritual health. No wonder in their struggle with Peter, Jesus had emphatically told him the implication of his resistance to

his washing him, "...you will have no place with me" (V8). Jesus' wash is a daily need of every child of his. We should desire it, crave it and without any resistance, submit to it. For the total therapy it brings to bear on us, we daily need it. It brings three benefits to our being-the physical bath and touch, the spiritual bath and the spiritual health. The triple advantages this births into your life is beyond what the mind can comprehend, neither is it an issue to rationalise. It is what faith should understand and seize the opportunity without a struggle. A daily wash by Jesus through his word that teaches, rebukes, corrects and trains in righteousness and equips for every good work (2Tim 3:16-17), is a daily bath you can not afford to resist or avoid. When you do not take a physical bath any day, how comfortable are you on such a day. In certain places the weather condition makes you bath many times a day and not just once. Much as you desire physical bath, much more should you desire spiritual bath. Jesus desires to bath you today as he did the disciples. All of them were birthed including Judas. All of these people lined up for ordination, will be ordained whether there be a Judas among them. And we hope not. Yet much more than physical bath and physical ordination which are needful, is his heart bath and heart ordination of you. If while Jesus baths you outwardly and your heart resists his bath, or while we lay our hands on you and your heart resists our hand and therefore the hand of Jesus Christ whom we represent, then like a Judas, Satan will bath you and ordain you to operate as an antichrist in collar and cassock. Though in ministry, yet your ministry will be working against God's kingdom. While those genuinely called are busy building it, you ordained of Satan will be destroying. While the children and servants of God are occupying till Jesus comes, you will be occupying till Satan comes. All of us children of God however do sometime, resist Jesus' wash; and we do so to have our way to gratifying the flesh. At the moment we resist Jesus' wash, we have no part with him. Beloved, how long have you been in church yet never allowing Jesus to bath you? When last did you resist Jesus' wash? How long have been resisting it? How irregular are you in allowing him wash you? You lay down to his wash today but tomorrow you are saying a no to it. How much longer will you continue to resist it? How much longer would continue to remain without a part with Jesus ?

4. Devout Service Models Service and Secures Your Position-vs 12-17

First things first says some the progressive mind. And Jesus had not only demonstrated this, but modelled it to the disciples and indeed the church today. He had undressed for service and having served, he had redressed, return to his place and assumed his position. Then a syllabi had emerged out of what He had been doing. He began by asking them, "Do you understand what I have done for you? What a sound reminder this question must have been to Peter particularly? He, it was who misunderstood what Jesus set out to do. As a result he had tried to resist Jesus' washing of him until he was told was he told what it would cause him should be washed. We have lost so much in the cause of our walk with the Lord due to prideful resistance of his touch, prompting, counsel, teachings, instructions and commands. Has Jesus been trying to do something to you? How long have been resisting his reaching you? Is he trying to do something in your life right now? Do you understand this which He trying to do? Would you yield to his touch and prompting today? Would you take his counsel and teachings? Would you take his instructions and his commands seriously and implement them to the latter? Would you say a bye to resisting Christ with the old year? Would you let him do with as it pleases him in the New Year? No two people ever walk together unless they be agreed. Jesus had gone on to point out to them the essence of this act of feet washing. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord', and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I your Lord and Teacher has 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" (vs 13-16). A teacher does not only teach but models his life and work to the learners. So also when a master serves he models service to his servants. Jesus said "If I your 'Teacher' and 'Lord' have washed your feet you should do the same to one another." Not too many people are servants. Most would rather loved to be served. Yet The bid man, Jesus Teacher and Lord came down low to becoming a servant to serving those who should serve him. He clothed himself with humility. We all are naturally proud and it takes only the grace of God to have humility replace pride in our lives. Humility is a virtue that attracts God's grace and enables a free flowing and selfless service. Position, Power and Pride however raises you high demanding service and places you in the opposition. For God opposes the proud. You then, are not able to let Jesus detail your life and neither are you able to serve others unless you take off the dress of pride and put on the dress of humility. The Lord and the Teacher has served, then who are you a mere servant not bow and tremble as you serve. For no servant is greater that his master, nor a

messenger greater than the one who sent him. Knowing these things has the implication of doing them. And you are never blessed when you know and refused to do them for hear the conclusion of Jesus. "Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them. How of these things-good works do you know? And how much of it have you done or are you doing? How much do you know and yet refused the doing of them? Jesus is much more interested in your doing them than knowing them. What will stand for you in judgment is your doing orchestrated by faith and not your knowledge that puffs up to pride.