The Passion Prologue
(A Study of the Gospel of John; Message #52)
John 13:1-5

A. It is not easy to watch Jesus wash feet. Nor was it easy for Jesus
B. We now move from the noise of the world into a quiet place of “his own”
C. These first five verses of John 13 serve as a prologue to Jesus’ Passion
D. John puts our text in proper time frame: “It was just before the Passover” (13:1)

A DISCIPLE KNOWS LOVE (13:1b)

A. The first of three “strong” verbs is “Jesus knowing the time had come…”
   1. Jesus impending death is a planned event by Jesus himself for the world
   2. This is the weekend of Jesus’ descent into suffering, death, and the grave
   3. There is a passing over of the world’s sin into oblivion because of Christ’s victory on the cross
B. The second of three “strong” verbs is “Jesus...having loved…”
   1. John summarizes Jesus’ three years of ministry as a time of “loving his own”
      a. In the half of John’s Gospel, he focuses on Life and Light
      b. In John 13-17, his focus is on Love
   2. The disciples will be the way the Risen Lord will reach out into his world
C. The third of three “strong” verbs is “Jesus...loved them to the finish”
   1. This is the same word Jesus used on the cross: It has been finished!
   2. Jesus would bring the Father’s love to a perfect “finish” on his Cross
      “As the Father has sent me, so I send you, and when he had said this he breathed on
      them and said to them, ‘Welcome the Holy Spirit’” (John 20:19-23)
      “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son...” (John 3:16)
   3. These words are for disciples to receive as an inheritance, to be grateful
      for, and to engage as our mission

A DISCIPLE KNOWS REALITY (13:2-3)

A. Jesus had to come because we live in a messed up world...
B. The focus is on the phrase “to betray” - which is lit. “to hand over”

1. It’s the word used in the Old Testament for God’s great historic acts of “handing over”
2. There are actually multiple “handed overs” through this passion text
C. Meanwhile, the devil is still hard at work in disciple’s lives
   1. Disciples should be aware of his constant seductions and of God’s protections
   2. Ultimately, Satan does not defeat Jesus; Jesus defeats Satan

A DISCIPLE KNOWS SERVICE (13:4-5)

A. Three great moments are highlighted in the third verse:
   1. The “whence” is knowing he came from the Father...
   2. The “whither” is knowing he is going back to the Father
   3. The “mission” is knowing that the Father has “put all things under his power”
B. Rising in the middle of dinner, Jesus underscores this is different than the customary footwashing performed by servants
   1. The disrobing and re-robing is a picture of Jesus’ entire ministry
   2. This is the Gospel; Jesus lays down his life to take it up again (John 10:17)

A DISCIPLE FOLLOWS JESUS (13:5)

A. And Jesus commences to washing his disciples’ feet
   1. The disciples should be washing his feet
   2. These disciples...do they deserve to have their feet washed?
   3. No disciple deserves to have Jesus wash his feet
B. “Don’t wash their feet Jesus, tell them to wash yours”
   1. Why? Do we think it’s appropriate that God is on his hands and knees?
   2. Do we object because we don’t want to see God washing our feet? Or do we object because he might ask us to do the same?