



INTRODUCTION

Why should the apostle Peter have been so shocked when Jesus approached him with basin and towel on that last night before the crucifixion, (John 13:3-8)? Well, why shouldn't He? For the Master and Lord to act like a slave in providing comfort for the guests was unheard of. It seemed like some kind of joke. Even Jesus had not done this before. The apostles had eaten with Jesus many times, and He had accepted the service of others in a natural way. He allowed Martha to serve Him at the table, (Luke 10:40; John 12:2); and He accepted the ministrations of grateful women, (Luke 7:36-50; John 12:1-9). There had been other Passover suppers together, but this was the first time Jesus ever washed the disciples' feet.

The occasion of His last supper with His disciples called for what Jesus did. Even to that late hour they had missed the whole tenor of His ministry. He had come to serve. He served by teaching and preaching. He served by casting out demons, healing of all the sick and even raising the dead. The greatest service of all remained to be accomplished in His dying for the sins of men. He was a serving Savior. With the basin and the towel He rendered a service greater than the cleansing of feet with water. It was the opening of minds with His teaching. The conversations recorded in today's text contributed to, but did not wholly accomplish the teaching that remained to be completed some time later with the basin and towel.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Jesus was nearing the conclusion of His public ministry. His work in Galilee was virtually completed, and He was making His way through Perea, the land east of the Jordan River toward the closing events in a and around Jerusalem. The emphasis for this week's lesson is on the manner on ministry - through following Him whose dominant purpose was not to be served, but to serve.

(Mark 10:35-37) And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came unto Him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldst do for us whatsoever we shall desire. And He said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? They said unto Him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on the right hand, and the other on the left hand, in thy glory.

Only recently, Peter had been accorded special honor in response to his confession of Jesus as the Christ, (Matthew 16:17-18). Now the other two from the "inner-circle" of the apostles wished to assure their own special place with Jesus in glory.

Who had a better right to special consideration than James and John? Among the first of Jesus' disciples, they had been with Him where others had not, (Mark 9:2-9). They may even have been first cousins of Jesus, their Salome being, perhaps, a sister to His Mother Mary. Their suggestions are strengthened by Matthew's record, which says that Salome approached Jesus with the two and presented their request.

We can only wonder what kind of kingdom the sons of Zebedee expected to share with Jesus. He had predicted His suffering and death. Did they not believe Him? He had predicted His resurrection. Did they expect Him to reign on earth afterward? Or did they anticipate His reign in Heaven?

Seats beside the throne were places of great honor and influence. Psalm 110:1, echoed almost a dozen times in the New Testament references to Jesus, says "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." James and John said nothing of responsibilities involved in the positions they sought. But they wished to be near their Lord. That is not all bad, if the desire is for companionship rather than for the recognition.

James and John expressed selfish concern about their rewards for following Jesus, and this not long after Jesus had told them He was going to be mocked, mistreated, and finally killed. Rewards there will be, but Jesus made it clear that for now His disciples must concentrate on living the life of a true follower with all that that demands. Bearing the cross must come before wearing the crown.



Rev. Anthony Jinwright
.....Salem Baptist pastor



Rev. Robert Leak
.....New St. John pastor

Popularity Contest Banquet

The Camp Dorothy Walls Board of Trustees of the Western North Carolina Conference of the A.M.E. Zion Church will sponsor a Popularity Contest-Banquet Friday, April 6, at 7 p.m. at the Greenville Center, 1330 Spring St.

Rev. Hern Lovell, secretary of the board, is coordinator of this affair.

Dr. George E. Battle Jr. is chairman and pastor of Greater Gethsemane A.M.E. Zion Church, and can be contacted for reservations. The Right Rev. William M. Smith is Bishop of the Western N.C. Conference. GETHSEMANE BAPTIST Rev. C. E. Dewberry, pastor of Gethsemane Baptist Church, will be the guest speaker at Victory Baptist Church in Statesville at 3 p.m., Sunday, April 8.

Rev. McCaskil, pastor of Victory, will be honored during this Appreciation Service.

EBENEZER
Dr. Caesar A. W. Clark of Dallas, Texas, will be the guest speaker at a crusade revival, sponsored by the Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Association. The revival will be held at the Shelby Junior High School gymnasium April 9-13. Services will begin each evening at 7 p.m. The public is cordially invited to attend.

FIRST U.P.
The Sunday School at first United Presbyterian Church will kick off its Sunday School Growth Campaign Sunday, April 1. Each Sunday in April has been designated as a launch Sunday. Each Sunday School class will perform a five minute presentation during morning

worship to motivate interest and participation in the church's Sunday School Program. Follow-up events will be planned for Mother's Day, summer, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

The Sunday School staff and church's congregation are united in prayer to better work together in carrying out the campaign. You are invited to join the Sunday School at First United Presbyterian each Sunday at 9:45 a.m. The church is located at 201 East 7th St.

FRIENDSHIP BAPTIST
The Friendship Baptist Church Choir will present its annual concert, "Music At Easter," on April 22, at 6 p.m.

Dr. Clifford A. Jones, Sr., pastor and the Friendship Family will be elated if you would come and share in this service praising our risen Saviour, Jesus Christ.

The Church Choir, under the direction of Mr. L. Gerado Stroud, Minister of Music, and Mr. Frank Williams, Choral Director, will perform a variety of music including "Sanctus," "This Too Will Pass" and "The Last Words of David."

Friendship is located at 3301 Beatties Ford Road, and if you require further information, please contact the Church Office at 392-0391.

Do you have something to say? Then do so for everyone to read. The Charlotte Post, the only other voice in town, welcomes all letters on various subjects.

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