

Maundy Thursday  
St. John 13:1-15  
April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021  
Sts. Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC  
Simpsonville, SC  
Pastor Jerald Dulas

## When Jesus Knew That His Hour Had Come

*In Nomine Iesu!*

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

### **Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:**

O Lord Jesus Christ, we thank Thee, that of Thine infinite mercy Thou hast instituted this Thy Sacrament, in which we eat Thy Body and drink Thy Blood: Grant us, we beseech Thee, by Thy Holy Spirit, that we may not receive this gift unworthily, but that we may confess our sins, remember Thine agony and death, believe the forgiveness of sin, and day by day grow in faith and love, until we obtain eternal salvation through Thee, Who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one true God, world without end. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

On Maundy Thursday, today, we celebrate the institution of the Lord's Supper. He gave us this meal of His Body and Blood to grant to us forgiveness, life and salvation. We eat His Body and drink His Blood and thereby receive remission of our sins. This is His gift to us on the night of His betrayal and arrest and the night before His suffering, crucifixion and death. So, one would expect to have a Gospel reading that corresponded to the purpose of this day; one would expect to hear about the institution of the Lord's Supper from one of the three Evangelists who record this institution of our Lord's Supper—Sts. Matthew, Mark or Luke. Only the Epistle records our Lord's institution of the Holy Supper from the Blessed Apostle St. Paul in his First Epistle to the Church at Corinth.

Instead of a Gospel with the institution of our Lord's Supper we have instead our Lord's washing of the feet of the Apostles. *Why this Gospel on this day?* This pericope connects the other sacrament—Holy Baptism—to our Lord's Supper. These two sacraments are connected. Just as water and blood flowed from our Lord's spear-pierced side, the water of Holy Baptism and the Blood that we drink in the wine of the Cup both wash us clean from our sins. The water of Holy Baptism washes away our sin because it washes us with the Blood of the Lamb Whose Blood was shed on the tree of the holy cross. The Blood of our Lord which we receive in the Lord's Supper also washes away our sins because it also connects us to the sacrifice of our Lord + Jesus. When we drink the Cup, we remember and proclaim our Lord's death until He comes.

Water and Blood cleanse us from all our sins. Water cleanses us in Holy Baptism, because by it we are covered with our Lord's Blood shed on the cross, and Blood cleanses us in the wine that we drink in the Lord's Supper. By both we are washed in Blood. This washing of Blood is foreshadowed in the Lesson from the Second Book of Moses, commonly called Exodus, in which we read tonight about the institution of the Lord's Passover. The lamb was sacrificed at twilight and some of its blood was put on the two door posts and upon the lintel above the door, so that the Lord God would not visit upon that house the plague of the death of the firstborn. This was an act of faith. They were saved because they believed the Word of the Lord that He would deliver them if they put the blood of the lamb on the doorposts and lintel.

The lamb in the sacrifice foreshadowed the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world—our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. He is both the Lamb that is sacrificed to deliver us from the plague of death that our sins merit and He is also the Firstborn of the Lord God Who dies on behalf of the Lord God's people. He dies on our behalf, for our sins. We are delivered from sin and death by His sacrifice.

This is the meal that our Lord + Jesus sits down with His Apostles to eat as a memorial of that first Passover. He eats this meal knowing that all things were now ready for His death on our behalf. All things were now accomplished. The Law of God was now fulfilled. The Lord + Jesus knew that His hour had come. Therefore, He sits down with His Apostles to eat the Passover. This meal was considered a feast. It preceded the Feast of Unleavened bread when the Jews would only eat unleavened bread and bitter herbs for seven days. The Jews would feast and then they would fast. We as Christians fast during the forty days of Lent and then we feast during the Easter season. For the Jew hunger would always follow feasting. For us Christians we celebrate the end of fasting with feasting. Joy overtakes sorrow for the Christian. We rejoice and celebrate after sorrow and hunger.

This reflects the reality of the Christian: after this life of suffering is over, there will be eternal joy and celebration. After a life of struggling with sin and death, we will rejoice eternally in sinless purity and with life eternal. The sadness of this life is followed by eternal joy for all those who cling to the Lord + Jesus in faith. All those who have been washed in the Blood of the Lamb—whose doorposts and lintel of the heart have been washed with the Blood of the Lamb—will receive the crown of life. All of us who have been baptized in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost have had the doorposts and lintels of their hearts washed with the Blood of the Lamb, so that through our faith in the gift of our Holy Baptism the Lord God passes over our sins, and does not destroy us eternally in Hell because of them. We get to feast eternally with our Lord + Jesus for His deliverance of us by being our sacrificial Lamb that takes away the sins of the whole world.

This is why our Lord offers to us a foretaste of this eternal heavenly feast in the Lord's Supper. When we eat our Lord's Body and drink His Blood offered to us in bread and wine, we are receiving a foretaste of the eternal feast to come. Just as the Jews in the Passover meal had a foretaste of the meal that our Lord + Jesus institutes for us and all baptized Christians tonight.

There is one key phrase that the Apostle and Evangelist uses when he states that our Lord + Jesus knew that His hour had come. He writes that the Lord + Jesus loved His own who were in the world until the end. All of the events of tonight are signs of our Lord's love for us and for all those who cling to Him in faith. He gives us a meal of His Body and Blood for our forgiveness out of love for us. He washes us clean with water of Holy Baptism—claiming us as children of the Triune Lord God—out of His great love for us. He institutes the Lord's Supper with His Apostles out of love for them and for all of us who continue to eat this blessed Supper. He washes the feet of His Apostles to show us His humility and love for us. He humbles Himself to be betrayed into the hands of sinful men out of love for us. He is beaten, spit upon, mocked, whipped, and crucified out of His love for all of us. He suffers and dies on the tree of the holy cross, offering up His Body and Blood as a once and for all time sacrifice for us out of His love for us. Everything He does for us tonight He does out of love for us.

Tonight, we are connected not only to our Lord's death through the remembrance of the institution of our Lord's Supper, but we are connected to our Lord's death by the remembrance of our Holy Baptism in which we were washed clean of all of our sins. Our Lord provides for our redemption by providing us with the means by which we may participate in the redemption He won for us. He has given us Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper that through faith in these means we may trust in the promise of our Lord God that He would deliver us from all our sins; that He would pass over our sins and grant deliverance from the bondage of slavery to sin and death.

Therefore, my dear friends, as we complete our fast in the next few days, let us look forward to

the feast of our Lord's resurrection. There we will celebrate the new life that He has given to us, and we will rejoice that He has promised us a new, eternal life with Him in Heaven. Tonight, we get to share in a foretaste of that eternal feast. We get to feast in the midst of our fast upon our Lord's Body and Blood given in bread and wine. This meal grants us all the remission of our sins. Let us give thanks and praise to our Redeemer Who loved us to the end and gave us a means of salvation. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:**

We thank Thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of all men, that Thou hast given Thyself into death for us to make atonement for our sins, and hast also left us an example of mutual service by humbly washing Thy disciples' feet; and we heartily beseech Thee, govern and direct our hearts by Thy Holy Spirit that we may in true faith firmly cling to Thee as our Savior, faithfully serve our neighbor with works of love, and obtain eternal salvation through Thy merit, Who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

**The Votum:**

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

*Soli Deo Gloria!*