

02-09-01a Revelation

We have approached the portion of our worship service where we devote our full attention to the word of God and seek to be edified and built up therein and it is an opportunity for us to set aside the cares and the distractions and the issues that are always near at hand in our minds and to spend time by the oasis of living water that God has given us in his word and through his spirit. We take this opportunity to pause for a moment and go before the Lord in prayer and ensure that we are prepared to take full advantage of the fellowship that we enjoy as believers of like mind. I think sometimes there is sort of an unconscious impression that we develop that well, during the teaching of the word of God it is just primarily one spiritual gift in operation.

There is somebody who is teaching and everyone else is listening and it is sort of a one-way distribution of the wealth of God's word. But the reason the Bible says, forsake not the assembling of yourselves together is because there is something God does through his spirit in a group of believers. I became aware of this during my time in the military where I would travel and have to listen to a Bible class on tape all by myself off on a ship.

I used to pack a little portable cassette player even out in the field. I had an old dinged up thing that would go in my Alice pack and I would pull it out late at night and get a little tiny earphone and stick it in my ear and lay in my sleeping bag and listen to at least a few minutes of the teaching of the word of God. But it isn't the same.

That is why many people have talked about the value of face-to-face teaching but the word of God talks about not so much being face-to-face with the teacher as being assembled with fellow believers. It is the assembly that Jesus spoke of when he said, where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst. There is a fellowship in the truth that only happens when we are assembled with other believers.

I would encourage, I don't know where our recordings go or who hears them, but if there is anyone out there that does nothing but listen to tapes, I would encourage them to find a place to fellowship even if that is not going to be the place that you get your primary spiritual food. There is no substitute for fellowship with believers. Find a place where you can relax, where you can be flexible, where you can find the good things.

You are always going to find things you may not agree with. You may find things that are irritating or that you could do without, but find a place. All of us have a need and it is a biblical command, forsake not the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is.

The reason for that is our fellowship. Our spiritual life cannot hinge just on hearing the teaching of the word of God alone. We are a body.

We are a fellowship. There is a Lord and a faith and a baptism that unites us. It is critically important for us to seek the company of fellow believers.

It is a privilege to be assembled with you who are here this morning. As we go before the Lord in prayer, it is one of the things we can be thankful for. Sometimes we do find ourselves in a situation where there just is no place to assemble.

There are Moses in the wilderness or Joseph in the prison where there just aren't any others. But hopefully that is a time of testing with a measurable end. We certainly don't want to overlook an opportunity if it is right there and we are missing it.

Let's take a moment and go before the Lord in prayer. Father, you are our strength. You are our Redeemer.

You are the source of our life. You are the one who promises our future, our hope, our hope depends entirely on your character, on your grace, and on your faithfulness. Because of that we rest in confidence and we have great assurance because you never change.

Your word never fails. It is demonstrated through thousands of years of history. There is not one word of yours that has ever fallen to the ground.

We are grateful, Father, for your character and for its daily manifestations toward us. We ask your blessing on us as we fellowship together in your word and we pray that God the Holy Spirit will find willing and ready hearts in which to plant the seed of your word that will grow and produce fruit that not only enables us to fulfill our purpose and our calling but also and ultimately reflects your glory and the glory of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. We thank you for the environment you have placed us within.

We thank you for our nation and for our freedoms. We thank you for our form of government and the honorable and faithful Christian men who wrote it into existence through our Constitution, through our Declaration of Independence, and we pray that you will continue to bless us and bless our nation, be with those who have the rule over us, guide their hearts and their minds as they make decisions, as they weigh priorities, as they contend with the difficulties, both foreign and domestic, that are their responsibility to handle. We pray particularly for those who are men of faith.

We pray for President Bush that you will give him a special measure of your spirit and quicken the word that resides in his soul. We are grateful that he is in that office, and we ask your special hand of blessing on him in the days ahead. And we ask your blessing on us now as we study your word together.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. For our scripture reading this morning, let me try to stop and remember where our scripture reading is.

It's in John Chapter 13. John Chapter 13. This is related to what we studied in the letter to the church at Smyrna, and it also leads into what we're going to study this morning, which is the third

of the seven letters that the Lord Jesus Christ sends to the churches of Asia, the church at Pergamos or Pergamum.

And in John 13, you will remember that this is the night before Jesus is to be crucified. It is the night in which he is betrayed. It is the night in which he shares a final meal with the disciples in the upper room.

And in John Chapter 13, it says, Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come, that he should depart from this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. Reminiscent of the encouragement of the believers at Smyrna to be faithful unto death as long as you live. Be faithful unto the end.

And this is also a reminder, and I can't help pointing this out because it is such a widespread misconception, such an annual unfortunate happening, that the timing of the events surrounding Jesus' crucifixion, and we've studied this in some of our Resurrection Sunday lessons, that the misunderstanding that the upper room meal is in fact a celebration of the Passover when it was the night before. And one of the evidences of that is in this verse. This is before the feast of Passover, not during or on.

This is the 13th of Nisan, or Abib. And later on when Jesus is arrested, you have the Jews who will not enter the Roman courts because they do not want to be defiled and be unable to eat the Passover and so on. But the supper being ended, notice this is before the feast of Passover, and the supper is ended.

Supper is over and it is still before the feast. So if there was any doubt in people's mind or any misapprehension from the other Gospels, John is very clear that the upper room meal was before the Passover, it was not the Passover. Supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands and that he had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper, laid aside his garments, took a towel, and girded himself.

What I find fascinating about this is that John gives us quite a bit of background. Normally in narrative you just get events happening one after another, but look at all of the things that are listed by John under the ministry of the Spirit as going on in Jesus' mind and factors that affected what he does here. Jesus knew that his hour had come, he knew he was departing this world to go to the Father, he had established a pattern of loving his own who were in the world and he was going to continue that pattern all the way up to his death.

Very reminiscent of the language of Revelation chapter 2. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas, so now we get the opposite side of the coin, to betray him. Jesus, and now we have another look into the mind and heart of the Lord Jesus, knowing that the Father has given all things into his hands and that he had come from God and that he was going to God. How many different things have we been told that are going on in Jesus' mind? This is really an

amazing piece of scripture to see exactly what is going on in his mind.

John, the beloved apostle who knew Jesus best, who probably of all the disciples was closest to him, knew these things because he knew Jesus so well. God the Holy Spirit illuminates his understanding of what Jesus was thinking. Jesus may have even mentioned this during the conversation at the meal, we don't have much of that conversation recorded.

But John knew what was in Jesus' heart and even as he remembers that the Father had given him all things. If you are the possessor of all things, what is your station in that environment? Are you low or high? Are you the master and the surveyor of the domain or are you a hired hand? Knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, knowing that he had come from God and knowing that he was going back to God, this is all reminiscent of all of the high attributes that belong to Jesus Christ in his deity and in his relationship to the Father. He rose from the supper, he laid aside his garments, took a towel and girded himself.

After that he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded. Then he came to Simon Peter and Peter said to him, Lord are you washing my feet? Jesus answered and said to him, what I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this. Peter said to him, you shall never wash my feet.

Jesus answered him, if I do not wash you, you have no part with me, no meros, no share. Simon Peter said to him, Lord, in that case not my feet only, but my hands and my head. Jesus said to him, he who is bathed needs only to wash his feet and is completely clean.

And you are clean, but not all of you. For he knew who would betray him, therefore he said, you are not all clean. This of course is the distinction between salvation cleansing and salvation positional truth that has to do with redemption, reconciliation and propitiation that is applied on our behalf at the point of our salvation and the fact that after we are saved, when we sin, there is still a consequence of sin.

We are not liable for the penalty of sin. We are not liable for the guilt of sin. We are not liable for the identity as a sinner because all of these have been shouldered by Christ on the cross.

But sin still has consequences that were not remedied once and for all at the cross. As a believer, if we sin, it still interrupts our fellowship with God the Father. It mutes the voice of the Holy Spirit in our soul.

It takes away our strength. You think about Samson and Delilah. Samson had strength from God, but when he allowed someone to bring him to the place where he had violated his oath and his commitment to God in the form of his Nazarite vow and the length of his hair, even though he himself did not cut it off, he placed into someone's hands the means of removing his strength and of dragging him outside the covenant conditions under which he functioned.

When he handed the key to that lock to Delilah, it is all the same as if he took the scissors to his own head. He had plenty of history. Every time he told her something, she told the Philistines and they used those against him.

He finally told her about his hair. To give away our strength is what happens when we voluntarily sin. Even though we are saved, even though we are cleansed, even though we are forgiven at the point of our faith in Christ, even though God was propitiated for sin, everybody sinned.

Even unbelievers sinned. The propitiation, the penalty has been paid for all sins. No one is going to suffer the penalty for sin because Christ, like the hymn says, Jesus paid it all.

Not just for us, but for the whole world, John says. But, there are consequences of sin. That is why we acknowledge our sins.

David says in the Psalms, I will acknowledge my sins before God. He says, I will be sorry for my sin. I will go before the Lord and express my sorrow at having committed this sin.

There is nothing inherently wrong with being sorry unless you think that you have to be sorry or God isn't going to forgive. 1 John 1.9 is the most familiar verse in this context, but there are many others. So, washing of the feet here versus the entire bath is the distinction between the ongoing acknowledgement of sin that cleanses us and restores us to our walk in the light with the Lord and the salvation cleansing.

So, when Peter clearly misunderstands, because Jesus says, I am going to wash your feet, and he says, no Lord, you are not going to wash my feet. In other words, Peter, of course, does not understand the picture here or he wouldn't be making these comments. But, Jesus uses this dialogue with Peter to make the point.

Jesus says, if you do not maintain a walk, if you do not acknowledge your sins and receive this cleansing, now the cleansing alone is not the walk, but without the cleansing, you cannot walk in the light. It is one of the conditions for walking in the light is to acknowledge sin. 1 John 1.7-9, if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship, each with the other, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanses us from all sin.

Walking in the light is conditioned on acknowledgement of our sin, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us when we are walking in the light. 1 John 1.8 talks about if we say we have no sin, we lie, the truth is not in us. But, if we acknowledge our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

So one part of walking in the light is acknowledging our sins. It is not the only part, and there has been a great misapprehension in some circles with which we are familiar, that all it takes is acknowledging our sins. It is an important component, but you cannot just acknowledge your sins and then you are walking in the light, but it is necessary.

So Jesus is teaching that through example. Peter says, Lord, you are not going to wash my feet. In other words, there are believers who think, well, I was saved at the point of the cross, I am totally forgiven, I am totally cleansed, and sin is no longer a problem.

I never have to really think about my sins again. Jesus says, if you think that way, if you are apathetic and indifferent about the sins that you commit after your salvation, you will have no inheritance with him. You will have no share in the spoils of victory that God is going to distribute in the millennial kingdom and beyond.

We have to deal with sin after salvation. Jesus says, I have to wash your feet. You have to let me cleanse you from what you have picked up in your walk.

Just walking through the world, we rub up against things that defile. We live in a craven culture. We live in a depraved culture.

We live in a culture that not only tolerates, but in some cases extols and venerates evil. Evil in terms of lifestyle offers an alternate truth that is contradictory to the word of God. So Peter, misunderstanding, says, oh well, then bathe me all over.

In other words, let's go back to the cross and let me have the redemption and reconciliation and propitiation all over again. Jesus says, no Peter, you don't understand. Once you've had the bath, you never need another bath.

You are clean. He who is bathed never has to take another bath. This is where the analogy begins to break down.

We say, well you know, I had a bath last Saturday and this Saturday I think everybody is going to vote that I have another one. The Saturday night bath used to be a tradition before people would go to church on Sunday. But Jesus says here, he who is bathed doesn't need to bathe again is the implication.

He just needs to wash his feet. The picture is that where spiritual things and where salvation is concerned, there is one cleansing bath and that's our salvation. After that, all we have to do is have our feet washed.

What does washing of feet do in the ancient world? When did you get your feet washed and why? It's when you came in from going about the business of the day, whether you were out working in the agricultural economy or whether you had walked through the streets of the city, but it's when you come into the house for fellowship with other people. When you sit down to a meal for nourishment, you wash your feet. It is a courtesy to those with whom you will dine.

It is to keep the interior of the home clean. It is a hygiene measure in the physical sense, but spiritually it represents being qualified for intimacy with others. Remember, people didn't sit on

chairs under a table as we do.

They reclined. We talked about this when we studied the Lord's Supper. When it says that John had his head in Jesus' bosom, people would recline on their left side because the left side, even today in Arabic and Semitic cultures, is sort of the evil side.

You do what you have to do that is not clean with your left hand and you eat with your right hand. You never want to lay your hand on a child's head and you particularly don't want to reach out and touch someone from the Middle East with your left hand because in many circles this is a defilement. Your left hand is the unclean hand.

That's the one you would flush the toilet with. It's your right hand that you use for eating. So to sit at the right hand was a place of honor.

That's where John was. If you're reclining on your left side, what does that mean? It means that your feet are going to be behind John. John is going to have his head near Jesus' chest and so on.

So people are overlaid around the room and your feet are going to be near someone else and you want them to be clean. It's a courtesy and it came to have a symbolic significance. So Jesus says, he who is bathed needs only to wash his feet.

The idea is that if you want to be qualified both for intimacy with others, to have love, for others, and to maintain love with God, fellowship with God. Revelation 3.20, if anyone will hear my voice and open the door, I will come into him and have a meal with him, sup with him, recline with him in intimate conversation, in intimate fellowship. Well, your feet need to be washed for that.

It's a matter of consideration. The picture is, it's a matter of acknowledging when we fail. It's important that we acknowledge our sins before God.

It's not the only component of walking in the light, but it is an essential component. Without it, you cannot walk in the light. Doing that alone is not walking in the light either, but it's essential.

So Jesus says he's completely clean and you are clean, but not all of you. For he knew who would betray him, therefore he said, you are not all clean. And you can analyze this and decide well, does this mean that Judas never had a bath or does it mean that Judas has not and refuses to have his feet washed.

And from looking at this in Greek, I think the latter is the case. I maintain that Judas is a believer, Judas had the bath, but Judas, even though Jesus washes his physical feet, Judas does not acknowledge the sin in his heart. He doesn't acknowledge his greed over the money box.

He doesn't acknowledge his own plan for Jesus. There's a lot of speculation and I think there may be some validity to it that the reason Judas betrayed Christ was to force him to come out and

bring in the kingdom. Judas thought he could maneuver Jesus into calling down the angels and establishing the throne of David.

He decided after three and a half years that Jesus was sort of dragging his feet and he kept talking about all this death and so on. And if Judas was a believer, and I think he was, and believed that Jesus was the Messiah, and I think he did, I think that that's probably a good hypothesis that he may have decided he would just force the issue. He basically put God to the test.

When scripture says, thou shalt not put the Lord thy God to the test, that's exactly what Judas did. I think he went and gave the priests the information about Jesus to force the issue. And he figured that when it came to a head and the conflict happened, he had seen Jesus heal.

He had seen Jesus do the supernatural. He knew Jesus had power and he figured Jesus will call down ten thousand angels to destroy the world and set him free, as the hymn says. And he was fooled.

And that's why he was so regretful when he went back and threw the money down and went out and hanged himself. Why was there so much remorse? Because he misunderstood. He miscalculated badly.

And he tried to put the Lord to the test. Anyway, when he says, you are not all clean, for he knew who would betray him, he says, he who is bathed needs only to wash his feet and he is then completely clean. But you are not all clean.

And even as he washed Judas' feet and moved on to the next disciple, Judas was still not completely clean. Why? Because there was sin in Judas' heart. He had hubris and he had the plan of Judas that he wanted to accomplish that didn't line up with the plan of God.

Of course, in the larger sense, everything we do is used by God and evil works together for good. Anyway, when he had washed their feet, taken his garments and sat down again, he said, do you know what I have done to you? And of course, the true answer to that question is no, they didn't really understand. Why does John give us so much information at the beginning of chapter 13, knowing that he had been given all things, knowing that he had come from the Father, knowing that he was going to the Father, knowing that he was protos, that he was first, he made himself last, he took on the form and function of a servant, he girded his waist and he washed the feet, because it requires in the human realm humility to acknowledge our sins and it requires an equal amount of humility to forgive the sins of others.

Why do we have difficulty forgiving one another? It's because we're arrogant. We think that something more ought to be done. What shall be done for the one who has been wronged? Where is the recompense and the justice that is due to me? There are people who think that because they lost a loved one on 9-11 or because they have been wronged in some way, that

there is a lot of restitution that should come their way.

And this is, I have a status because of what has happened to me. I have a standing because of who I am and you need to acknowledge that and you need to give me something for it. Some people wear their problems or what they've been deprived of like a badge and want people to acknowledge it and are very unhappy if people don't give them their due.

You find this in the workplace a lot of times. People think that they're not getting their due and mischief will follow. So Jesus says, do you know what I have done to you? You call me teacher and you call me kurios and you say well, for so I am.

If I then, your kurios and your didaskalos, there in verse 13, I am your kurios, I am your didaskalos. Both of those are functions that are recognized. And I, your lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.

Now people generally come to this passage and recognize humility and they recognize a principle of service, service to others and that's about as far as they go. They say well, we should live a life of service, we should serve, we should minister to others. Let's all get busy and minister.

Let's go out and minister. This is not ministry in the sense of let's go out and do something concrete that will benefit someone else. If you think about it, washing the feet, Jesus could have served the meal or could have handed out a garment to each one.

He could have procured a white robe and given it to each disciple and said, I am giving you clothing or I am feeding you or I am somehow meeting your needs. But washing of the feet has a specific meaning. Yes, there is a servant's attitude and yes, there is humility, but the functional role here is forgiveness.

If I, your lord and teacher, have forgiven you, you also ought to forgive one another. That is what Jesus has really done for them. For I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you.

It's a tragedy that you have churches where they just take this literally and they do the foot washing. We are so literal minded. You have people who think the bread and the cup turn into the actual body and blood of Jesus, which is essentially ritual cannibalism.

He says most assuredly, verse 16, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is he who sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

He doesn't say, if you know these things, you are blessed. He doesn't say, if you have been to Bible class, every time the doors are open, you are blessed. He doesn't say, if you have taken notes in the margin of your Bible and memorized scripture and filled up your notebook, you are blessed.

He says, if you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. One of our most frequent afflictions as believers is to miss the conditions for God's promises. You will inherit if you endure with faith and patience.

People just forget the if clause and say, we are all overcomers, we are all going to inherit. No, we are not. We are all going to be blessed if we know God's word.

No, we are not. If we do it. If we are a doer of the word and not a hearer only.

James had this figured out. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. Who is in the room at this point? How many disciples? All twelve, right? There are things that Jesus says and does before Judas leaves the room, and there are other things that Jesus says and does after Judas leaves the room.

That is critically important. It seems like an academic debate. Was Judas saved or not? Well, let's just go to heaven and find out is what a lot of people want to say.

Of course, if they are waiting until they go to heaven, they may have a long wait. Think about this. Jesus says, I am giving you an example that you should do as I have done to you.

You, plural, it takes in the whole group. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. Then look at verse 18, I do not speak concerning all of you.

I know whom I have chosen, but so that the scripture may be fulfilled, he who eats bread with me has lifted up his heel against me. Now I tell you before it comes that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am he. Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives me, and he who receives me receives him who sent me.

What an odd thing for Jesus to say at this point. He is obviously referring to Judas. He says, I know whom I have chosen.

People say, well, see Judas was an unbeliever. Jesus has only chosen the eleven disciples who are believers and Judas is not chosen. If you want to try to force that understanding into this passage, you have to have the natural understanding.

Why did Jesus not deliver this speech after Judas leaves? Because Judas is a believer, but just like Romans 8, 28 and 29, those who are foreknown and are chosen and are called and are predestined to be conformed to the image of his son and are justified and all of that, this is a subset of believers. Those who respond to the calling and there are believers who do not respond to the calling. Judas was one of them.

He made up his own calling. You can imagine, suppose that Judas' plan had worked. Suppose that Judas had given this information to the Pharisees and they had gotten Jesus arrested and

Jesus, instead of in humility, like a sheep before its shearers is dumb and going to the cross, suppose he had called down a legion of angels.

Suppose he had wiped out the opposition and taken the throne of his father David. What would the reputation of Judas be? Ah, here is the golden fair-haired boy who came in and made it all happen. He was the key.

He is the one that brought Jesus out into the open. He is the one that is going to be leading the donkey that brings Jesus into Jerusalem to take the throne. He is the instrumental one.

He would be a big covered in glory part of the plan. He had an agenda. He had an idea of how he would be the means of delivering Israel from the Roman boot, grinding their neck into the dirt.

He would bring the Messiah in. He would be the catalyst. He would be the one that caused this to happen.

He was pursuing a different call. Jesus' call was to follow, to learn. Learn of me.

I am meek of heart. Take my yoke upon you. My burden is easy.

My yoke is light. Judas thought otherwise. We don't have time to go into all the details here but at the point that we do, we may just take John 13 verse by verse one of these days.

But the point here is Judas forfeited what he had with Christ. He was there. You'll notice Judas partook of the Last Supper.

He shared the bread and he shared the cup. He was there for that whole ceremony. This is my body which is broken for you.

This do in remembrance of me. This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Judas ate that bread and drank that cup and Jesus did not say, one of you is not really partaking of the new covenant.

One of you is not really qualified to do this. How easy it would have been for Jesus to do all these things after Judas left. But there is a dividing line and it's after the bread and the cup.

It's after the symbols of partaking of Christ in salvation and before the part of partaking with him in inheritance, in fulfillment of calling. Where is the dividing line with Judas? Jesus distinguishes and separates Judas out when it comes to forgiveness of sin, walking in fellowship and partaking. That's why he says here in verse 20, most assuredly I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives me and he who receives me receives him who sent me.

One of these is not going to be one sent. One of these who is a disciple is not going to be an apostle. He is not going to be sent.

He is split off from the other 11 at this point. He is not qualified for service and function because

he has not allowed his spiritual feet to be washed. He has not acknowledged the sin in his heart.

That's why Satan enters into him. That's why Satan uses him even though he is a believer. He is cut off from Christ.

He has fallen from grace as a believer. Just as Paul tells the Galatians that this can happen. Nothing is accidental in scripture.

There is a reason why Judas is present for the Last Supper but absent when it comes to the cleansing of the spiritual feet, the acknowledgement of sin. There is a reason why Jesus points that out, why Judas is still in the room so that Jesus can point it out. Everything happens for a reason.

Everything that is recorded in scripture is there for a reason. I would submit to you that if Judas was an unbeliever, he would have gotten up and departed before the meal rather than after. He would have not been present for the washing of the feet and for the teaching that Jesus does on this occasion because it would have been unnecessary for Jesus to distinguish between believers, between those who have partaken of the body and the blood but are not qualified to walk in the light, are not qualified to sit at the fellowship meal because their feet are dirty as it were and will not have a portion, will not have a portion.

If I do not wash your feet, you have no portion with me. He says, I have washed all twelve of your feet. Twenty-four feet, twelve disciples, two feet each.

He says, I have washed everyone's feet but there is one of you that is still not clean and that is Judas. He is out of fellowship. He is disqualified from having a part with Christ.

Judas will be in the resurrection but he is not going to be one of the twelve pillars. Someone is going to take his place. Someone else is going to fulfill his calling.

Someone else is going to fulfill his spot as an apostle and that is Saul of Tarsus. He is saved but look at what he has given up. His portion has gone into the lake of fire.

Every potential that Judas had, Judas could have been the apostle Paul. It sounds like an incredible thing to say but it is true. He was chosen by Christ.

He was called to the top of the mountain. He was commissioned. He was sent out twice in the power of the Holy Spirit and performed miracles and healings and castings out of demons.

He did everything that the other eleven did but there was one thing he did not do. He did not let the Lord wash his spiritual feet. He followed his own agenda.

He created an alternate truth and because of that his sin remained. His experiential sin. His walking through life sin.

The sin he picked up on his feet. He didn't need a bath but he did need his feet washed and when that did not happen he lost everything and that is summarized in the word Meros. He lost his portion.

He lost his share. Blessed and holy is he who has a share. A Meros in the first resurrection.

Judas is not blessed and he is not sanctified because he did not allow Jesus to wash his spiritual feet. He just went through the motions and that is such a danger for us. It is such a danger for believers in general in the church today to accept a pseudo-truth, an alternate reality that is foisted and is promoted and is agreed to and is heralded and published in books and put on videos and conveyed through the loudspeakers at stadiums.

It is going to deprive all of those who are led astray by it of their share. We have to look at the pure words of truth in the scripture. We have to hear and we have to heed.

He that has my words is blessed if he does them. Well, that is our scripture reading for this morning. Let's turn now to Revelation chapter 2 beginning in verse 12 where we resume now with the third church of seven in Asia to whom Jesus sends a personal letter.

I have a letter in my possession that was written by a great great great great uncle. He was a brother of my great great great grandfather and he was killed in the civil war. He wrote this letter while he was on duty down near San Antonio and sent it back to the family.

His name was Elijah W. Hull. Because of the circumstances and because he gave his life in the service of his country which at that point was the south, that letter is treasured in our family. It is a wonderful thing to have.

Can you imagine what a treasure it would be if you had a letter like that but the one who sent it was the Lord Jesus Christ? Would you look at every word? Would you think about every expression of thought that was in it? If you were handed, you opened up the post office, you unsealed the letter and unfolded it and began to read and it said yours truly, Jesus Christ. That would become a very valuable letter. Well, that is exactly what we have here.

This third letter beginning at verse 12 says, To the angel, to the messenger or pastor of the church in Pergamos, write. These things says he who has the sharp two edged sword. I know your works and where you dwell, where Satan's throne is.

And you hold fast to my name and did not deny my faith even in the days in which Antipas was my faithful martyr who was killed among you where Satan dwells. But I have a few things against you because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit sexual immorality. Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans which thing I hate.

Repent or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. He who has an ear, let him hear what the spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna to eat and I will give him a white stone and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.

Well here is another great opportunity to understand a blessing and a reward that comes to the faithful, to the ones who overcome, who persevere unto the end. Just the significance of manna that is hidden means that it is something that is exclusive, something desirable. We wonder about the white stone and the new name, what is the significance of that.

We also need to know what is the error of Balaam and what is the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. Well whatever it is, it is contrary to the true faith because the Lord Jesus is going to wipe it out with the sword that issues from his mouth. We are going to pause here and take our break and when we come back we are going to take a look at each of these phrases, each of these issues and figure out what they mean and see what it means to us.

Let's pause here and take our break.