

April 2nd 2006: John 13:1.....Loved them to the uttermost

This morning....conscious....that we are just about into Easter mode
Letterbox material....going out today.....Easter banner is up....services

But there is one more most import thing for us to do
That is....to prepare ourselves spiritually for Easter
by looking once more at the love of Jesus

Of course when we think of the love.....we think of the cross

There is a story told of a medieval monk who announced that he would be preaching the next Sunday evening on the love of God. As the shadows fell and the light ceased to come in through the cathedral windows, the congregation gathered. In the darkness of the altar the monk lit a candle and carried it to the crucifix. First of all he illuminated the crown of thorns. Next the two wounded hands. Then the marks of the spear wound. In the hush that fell he blew out the candle and left. There was nothing else to say.

Upon that cross of Jesus mine eyes at times can see, the very dying form of one who suffered there for me; and from my smitten heart with tears two wonders I confess—the wonders of His glorious love, and my own worthlessness.

It was prior to the cross though.....that our Saviour took the time to express His love
...in an action.....that was both symbolic and unique
An action that express His ongoing love for those He came to save...and pointed to death

It was the action of washing His disciples feet

John writes in John 13:1.....

This one verse has always said so much to me:→

It sets the time frame.....Just before the Passover feast....When Jesus...
Our Passover lamb.....Would sacrifice

It proclaims what Jesus knew

That the hour of His death had come.....

The reason He had come into the world was now here

That the path of the cross.....would also be the pathway home

But especially

It tells of Jesus love for those who follow Him

A love with which He had loved them.....right up to that point
And which now He would express to the uttermost

It is then we read about the evening meal—after such a statement of love

About Judas being ready to betray this One who had always loved him
And how Jesusdeliberately took the dress of a slave
.....deliberately took the humble instruments of a servant

and bowing before each.....He washed their feet
Philippians 2:6-8.....

There can be no doubt....that Jesus performed....as an example of serving one another
He said so in **13:14-15.....**

And we presume (*even tho not told*)**that no one else had bothered to wash.....**
And that Jesus seeing this....did soand therefore challenged them about attitude to....

But I know....Jesus never did anything without careful thought.....

And I sense that He knew long before.....that He would wash.....in the manner He did

So He did it during the meal.....not before

And as John says.....He did it as an expression of His love for them
A love that He was prepared to push....to its limits for each

For **Judas.....**

For **Peter.....**loud and argumentative.....Felt he could earn his own standing....

For **Philip.....**Asked the questions/statements...Like Lord show us the Father and that..

For **Thomas.....**just a little shaky in his belief.....Always wanting proof

And as Jesus looked around that group.....he loved them all.....Unconditionally

And as he removed his outer clothing He knew...time was close.....Clothing would be torn

And as He bowed at their feet....He knew it would only be hours....before He would be humiliated before the world

And as He washed the dirt from their feet.....He knew that His blood....shed for all
Would cleanse each heart from every sin.....Even the sins that still daily haunt
...those who have chosen Him

That's the expression of love we need to focus on.....as we look in our worship....
...ministry.....To that day we come as a group again to the cross
Renewing our commitment....offering our hearts....accepting example

In the Jewish Temple and tabernacle there burned a lamp, a light of sacrifice that never went out. Day and night summer and winter it shed its soft and mystic glow within the holy place.

In the Temple of the life of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ there was a lamp; a light that never went out. The oil that supplied it was never exhausted. No scorn, no hostility, no hatred could ever quench it. It was the light of love.

In the church of God there is a lamp and light that must never go out. This light is fueled by the love of God and is attended by the presence of the Holy Spirit. We must never allow scorn, hostility, hatred, or any other ungodly thing quench the light of God's love in our church

Jesus said: As I have loved you... you also should love one another

We often sing:

*Amazing love, O what sacrifice: The Son of God given for me.
My debt He pays and my death He dies, That I might live*

Such amazing love.....looks at you today.....**Knows all about you**....loves you

(Story about Dr Elizabeth Kluber-Ross.....Aids victim and Unconditional Love)

