

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE  
 Lessons: Matt.26:1-35  
 A.C. 4776

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 April 4, 1958

"And as they did eat, He said, Amen I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto Him, Lord is it I?

"And He answered and said, he that dippeth hand with Me in the dish, the same shall betray Me... Then Judas, who betrayed Him, answered and said, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said."  
 (Matt. 26:21-25)

If we are to come into the internal use of the Word, we should see that all things of the Word apply to ourselves, and that all the persons spoken of in the Word represent things that are in us.

We read: "The Lord being betrayed by Judas signifies that He was betrayed by the Jewish nation." (Doc. of L. 16)

Judas and the Jewish nation signifies the love of self. The Lord, with man, is love from the Lord into the Lord. It is nothing but the love of self which betrays the Lord in us.

The love of self is spoken of in three senses in the Word.

Concerning the favorable sense of the love of self we read: "The man, who is in the good of charity and faith, also loves himself and the world, but no otherwise than as a means to an end. With him the love of self has regard to love of the Lord; for he loves himself as a means to the end that he may serve the Lord; and the love of the world has regard to love of the neighbor: for he loves the world as a means for the sake of the end that he may serve the neighbor." (A.C. 7819)

"The reason the love of self and the love of the world are infernal loves, and the reason that man was able to come into them and thus destroy the will and understanding in himself, is that from creation the love of self and the love of the world are celestial; for they are loves of the natural man, which are of service to spiritual loves, as foundations are of service to houses. For from the love of self and the world man wills well to his body: he wants to be fed, clothed, and housed, to take thought for his household, to solicit employment for the sake of use, and even to be honored according to the dignity of the affairs which he administers, for the sake of obedience; and also to be delighted and recreated from the delights of the world. But all these things must be for the sake of the end which is use. For by these things he is in a state to serve the Lord, and to serve the neighbor. But where there is no love of serving the Lord and the neighbor, and only a love of serving himself from the world, then from being celestial, that love becomes infernal."  
 (D.L.W. 396)

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There is an intermediate love of self which, while not good, can yet lead to good, and there is the infernal love of self which makes hell for we read: "For example: if any one loves himself above others, and from this love studies to excel others in moral and civil life, in scientifics and doctrinal things, and to be exalted to dignities and also to wealth above others; and yet acknowledges and adores God, performs offices to the neighbor from the heart, and does from conscience what is just and fair - the evil of this love of self is that with which good and truth can be mixed... Whereas, he who loves himself above others, and from this love despises others in comparison with himself, hates those who do not honor, and, as it were, adore him, and feels the delight of hatred and revenge - the evil of that love is that with which good and truth cannot be mixed; for they are contraries." (A.C.3993<sup>9</sup>)

The former evil of the love of self spoken of above can in time be purified and become the genuine love of self. While the latter love of self is totally infernal and must be cast out.

As we are frequently taught, the love of self, when not in the feet, is an infernal love which is the opposite of love into the Lord. If we are to have a further idea of this love we must come to a fuller idea of what love into the Lord is, and from this see the love of self which is its opposite.

We are taught that in the first place we are to love the Lord as to His essence and thence His person, and not the other way around. To love the Lord as to His essence is to love the Lord as to His Divine Love, His Divine Wisdom and as to His Divine use. No man can internally do this unless he is in the things of the Divine love, the Divine Wisdom, and the Divine Uses from the Lord. The Lord says, He that loveth Me keepeth My Commandments, and the keeping of the Commandments of the Lord in the internal sense is nothing else than being in the things of Divine love, Divine wisdom and Divine use from the Lord.

We are taught that the Lord does more things for man every moment than can be comprehended in any number. While we can not comprehend the things of Infinite love, wisdom and use, which the Lord is doing for us every moment of our lives, we can comprehend a few of such things, and the more we advance the more of these things we can comprehend.

To love the visible Lord, in His Divine Human, is to love the Lord's working or operation, His changing of our lives by regeneration; His constant effort to lead us away from our own proprial things into the things of eternal life. This is a tremendous work, and if our eyes are open we can see the Lord laboring to save us, out of His Great Love and Wisdom. At first we see this only occasionally, in great events of our life, in times of great joy or sorrow. If we become spiritual we see this in many things, and particularly in the spiritual things the Lord does for us through others, if we are in love to the neighbor. If a man should become celestial he would perceive some thing of the Lord's love, wisdom and use in the Lord's working in him from moment to moment. In every least event of his spiritual and natural life, he would perceive the Lord's Divine Providence, and in this the Lord's Divine Love and Wisdom. It therefore might be said: to love the Lord is to love His Divine Providence. The Divine Providence works in various ways; inmosty it works in ways that no angel or man can comprehend. The celestial can perceive the Lord's presence, in the things of love and wisdom which are immediate from the Lord, and the wonder of the working of the Lord in the inmost of their mind.

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The spiritual perceive the Divine Providence of the Lord working through heaven and the neighbor, thus in all things of a spiritual human life. Those in external states can see some thing of the Divine Providence in the occurrences of the natural world, and the results thence in the external mind.

The Lord's Divine Providence works continually, immediately, and mediately through the things of the spiritual world, and through the events of the natural world, with every one; but the perception of this working is different with man according to the opening of the degrees of the mind.

While in our present state we may perceive little of the Lord's working in all things of our life, and have little perception of His love and wisdom, in every least thing which comes to our mind, or which happens to us in the world, still we can believe that He is so working and look forward to a perception of His working and love as our goal.

From ourselves we often resent things which happen to us, we resent the circumstances of our life both internal and external; we do not acknowledge the Lord's love and mercy which brings us into states of happiness and joy, or permits states of grief, sadness, depression, or tediousness. Ordinarily we only feel the presence of the Lord on such occasions as the death of one we love, the marriage or birth of those close to us, or some such event. In our ordinary daily life we do not perceive the presence of the Lord living and working in us moment after moment for our salvation, and have little faith in His love. Any resentment as to what comes to our thoughts or affections, particularly from the Word or Doctrine, or any resentment on account of what happens to us from without, interiorly comes from the love of self which is opposed to the Lord's love and Providence. If we were in love into the Lord, we would be thankful for every least thing which comes to us, seeing in it the Lord's love working to lead us out of the things of our proprium into the things of eternal life. Then we would indeed be in love into the Lord, and from the reception of this love, we would come into an image of it in the uses we perform towards the neighbor, so that the two Great Commandments would become one in us.

The twelve apostles including Judas left all they had to follow the Lord and work for His Kingdom; they learnt of Him, and gave of what they received to others. This is represented in our text by the apostles eating with the Lord, and dipping their hand in the same dish.

We may also have given up centering our life in the things of the world to center our lives in the things of the Word and the Church, and yet the love of self is still present, a love which finally betrays the Lord. The infernal love of self, with us, may be just as strong, or even stronger, in a life which centers in the Word and the Church as in a life which is merely of the world; for we may turn all things of the Word, the Doctrine and the Church to favor our love of self. This is, in fact, the love that is represented by Judas, and by the Jewish nation.

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Not only Judas, but also the high priest and scribes and the pharisees, represented, in what they did to the Lord, the Jewish nation. The difference was that the high priests, the scribes, the pharisees and lawyers only accepted the external of the Word. But Judas, as he followed the Lord, represented the acknowledgment of the internal of the Word, made manifest by the Doctrine of the Church. Judas's betrayal therefore represents, the betrayal of the internal of the Word and the Church by the love of self. It has some times been suggested that Judas did not think the Lord would be condemned, but that having all power, He would manifest His power; and the fact that he repented, returned the money, and went and hanged himself, when he saw what happened to the Lord supports this idea. If so, he trusted in himself and his own prudence, and not in the Divine Providence. So it is with us; it is the nature of the love of self to trust in ones own prudence, and not in the Lord's Providence; and all such trust betrays the Lord, and finally brings Him to a crucifixion. It is not easy to believe that our love of self, and the trusting in our human prudence thence, has such grievous consequences; and yet if we do not acknowledge this, if we do not see how our own prudence out of the love of self betrays the Lord, we are not prepared for the Holy Supper, wherefore we read:

"And as they did eat, He said. Amen I say unto you, that one of you shall betray Me. And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto Him, Lord is it I?"

AMEN