

John 13:21-32

²¹After saying this Jesus was troubled in spirit, and declared, "Very truly, I tell you, one of you will betray me." ²²The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he was speaking. ²³One of his disciples—the one whom Jesus loved—was reclining next to him; ²⁴Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking. ²⁵So while reclining next to Jesus, he asked him, "Lord, who is it?" ²⁶Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish." So when he had dipped the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas son of Simon Iscariot. ²⁷After he received the piece of bread, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, "Do quickly what you are going to do." ²⁸Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him. ²⁹Some thought that, because Judas had the common purse, Jesus was telling him, "Buy what we need for the festival"; or, that he should give something to the poor. ³⁰So, after receiving the piece of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.

³¹When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. ³²If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once.

"And it was night." In John's gospel light and dark are of great importance. In this small phrase there is great significance. John is calling us to pay attention and to think about what is going on.

The Gospel of John began with the idea of light coming into the world; "the light" which was to shine in the darkness and the darkness would not overcome it.

To enter a relationship with Jesus is to discover light; to leave the fellowship of Jesus was to exchange the light for the inevitable darkness. As Judas left the room he walked away from the fellowship and company of Jesus, and it was night.

I always find it fascinating when reading this account that as Judas left the room the disciples did not have a clue as to what he was doing and what was going on. Despite the dipping of the bread and it being passed to Judas in response to the question from the "beloved disciple" "Who is it?" there was ignorance amongst the 11 disciples.

Jesus was not, and is not, about embarrassing his followers. He knows we will fail him but he does not condemn us. Judas was reclining at table next to Jesus, to be given the piece of bread in the context of the Passover was to be seen as loved.

To be with Jesus is to have his light with us, it does not mean we will not encounter difficult times, what we could call dark times, but the light of his presence is with us that we may see the way forward and have hope. To walk away from Jesus is to go into darkness, into the night yet there is always a way back.

On the eve of the most important weekend of our faith where are you in relation to Jesus? Are you close to him, facing him, looking away, tempted to walk away? Never be complacent in your faith, even when very close to Jesus. Remember that a coal taken out of the fire stops burning quickly.