**John 13:18-26** **“I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, ‘He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me.’ 19Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am *He.* 20Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.” 21When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me.” 22Then the disciples looked at one another, perplexed about whom He spoke.**

**23Now there was leaning on Jesus’ bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved 24Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask who it was of whom He spoke. 25Then, leaning back on Jesus’ breast, he said to Him, “Lord, who is it?” 26Jesus answered, “It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped *it.*” And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon.**

Today, we begin to look forward to Easter. Easter is a time of hope and redemption. It’s a joyous time to realign our view of Christ and who we are in Him. Life has taken on a different look these last few weeks. It’s a great time to reflect on who Jesus is to us. Is He the name on the front of the church? Or is His Name tattooed upon soul? These weeks will reveal much about individual relationship with Jesus and the works that flow from that relationship.

Many know that I usually go verse by verse when speaking. Today, we’ll look at verses 18 and 26 closely. Verse 18, Jesus says - *“I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, ‘He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me.’*. ***I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen***. Ephesians 1:4 says *just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love*. Jesus chooses whom He chooses. We walk with Him, because of His Grace and Mercy. We’ve all fallen short, but Jesus has borne us up! Praise God that I didn’t have to be good enough or righteous enough before He sought me. While yet still a sinner, He died for me… Romans 5:8. Praises be to the Lord.

Our Bible is a wondrous document. The Old Testament testifies of the New Testament. A thousand years before Jesus was born scripture testified of Him. How do I know that it testified of Him? Because He says, “But that scripture may be fulfilled.” For many months, in the evening services, we’ve studied the Old Testament and then looked at it’s fulfillment in the New Testament. The Bible proves trustworthy again and again. We see that what God promised He delivered. Therefore, we have absolute confidence that what has not yet been delivered is on it’s way.

In Psalm 41:9 we read - *Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up his heal against me.* This is the scripture to which Jesus is referring. Judas Iscariot had pretended to be a friend to Jesus. He carried the money bag, though he was stealing from it – we know that from John 12:6. He lodged where Jesus lodged, traveled where Jesus traveled, and bowed his head when Jesus prayed. He was part of the 12. Scripture had to be fulfilled! God already knows. Judas chose. The God of the Universe knows the ending from the beginning. None of this was a shock. He knew from the foundations of the world that Judas would sell His Son.

Verse 26 says, *Jesus answered, “It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it.” And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.”* The next few verses say Satan entered Judas and, using the very feet that Jesus washed minutes before, Judas betrays our Savior! 30 pieces of silver – prophesied by Jeremiah, prophesied by Zechariah. Fulfilled in Matthew 27:3. Unmistakable truth gives us unshakable trust in God. That which Jesus started He will finish. We have only to wait faithfully and watch.

Comfort is not a catalyst for change. Comfort is almost never a catalyst of great change. The Truth of the Resurrection started with the pain of betrayal. The Joy of Salvation started in the cauldron of sadness. Jesus, troubled in Spirit, obediently submitted, knowing what He was called to do. That glorious Easter morning began that night in the garden. Christ set comfort aside, went to the Cross, becoming sin so those who accept Him might stand in righteousness. No, comfort is not a catalyst for change.

Throughout the Bible, God uses times of challenge to bring His people to faith. How might this time of discomfort be challenging the church to do things differently? Could it be that this virus is indeed a clarion call to the church, forcing us from the four corners of the building out into the highways and hedgerows to bring the people in so they too may be part of the coming great feast? It could be.

This week, consider what is the calling in this time of challenge? What is your calling in this time of challenge? Is it a call to repent, confess, and accept Jesus? Is it a call to realign and begin to be about Jesus work again? Is it a call to transform the church for the next generation? The times of greatest growth in the church have never been times of ease and comfort, so let’s not pray for a return to comfort but instead an infusion of strength. As we approach this Easter season, praise God for the discomfort that we might seek His direction. Praise God for uncertainty that we might embrace His opportunity. Praise God for His Son accepting our sin that we might have righteousness. God is great, He has a great plan. Where will we fit?