

The essence of discipleship (Quality: Very good)

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Preacher: Hyde, Leslie S B (1916-2001)

- [0 : 00] With the Lord's help, I will direct your attention to the Gospel according to John, the 13th chapter, verses 13, 14, and 15.
- The Gospel according to John, the 13th chapter, verses 13 to 15. Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say, Well, for so I am.
- If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet.
- For I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you. Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say, Well, for so I am.
- If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you.
- [1 : 20] The Lord Jesus, in these few words, touches upon a matter which is to bring out the essence of discipleship.
- It is easy for words to be uttered. Many may say in respect to the Lord that he is their Lord and Master.
- There is a searching word in the Gospel according to Luke. Ye call me Lord, ye say, Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say.
- And then follows the parable of the builders, one upon the rock and the other upon the sand.
- That one that built his house upon the rock was indicative of the one that not only heard, but did what the Lord said.
- [2 : 45] Whilst the one that built his house upon the sand represented the one that did not do what the Lord had said.
- There may be much building. Wonderful erection of the superstructure and yet not according to the divine plan.
- People can be quite satisfied with their religion and the manner in which they have evolved it, enlarged it, and yet it not be according to the purpose of God.
- There was one point that the Lord particularly stressed upon the heart of Moses in respect to the rearing and the preparation of and for the tabernacle.
- See that they'll do all things according to the pattern shown to thee in the holy mount. Now that has never been altered.
- [4 : 14] As it has its application in the veering of the tabernacle in the wilderness so representative of the Lord Jesus in various aspects of his glorious person so that was not altered one iota by the introduction of the gospel.
- It still remains in all our worship in all our profession see that they'll do all things that were according to that which was shown thee in the holy mount.

in the words of our text however we see that the Lord speaks carefully speaks rightly and he must do he could not do otherwise we may learn from this oh how much we may learn from the manner of the Lord's speeches and the feeling that was behind them ye call me master and Lord and ye say well for so I am the outward utterance is not condemned by the Lord Jesus Christ we may try to undermine a person we might try to tear them apart by asking them do they really mean what they say when they say

Lord or when they say master but we shall do well to observe what the Lord says ye call me master and Lord and ye say well whether you are aware of it even if you should be hypocritical in your saying ye say well because it's the truth for so I am what instruction for the disciples of Jesus Christ to not only to observe but to follow in the various situations that may occur in respect to themselves in respect to their relationships with others the Lord did not harshly cut off people because they said master and Lord and there was a query in the mind as to whether they said it from the heart whether they said it from the heart or whether they uttered words that they didn't understand yet the fact still remained that the Lord

Jesus Christ was Lord and he was master he was in complete control there was nothing that could be altered once the Lord had said it shall be done the Lord spake and it was done we may in the first place consider how these disciples came to call the Lord Jesus master and Lord rather we may ask ourselves how we came to come to this point where we call the Lord master and where we call him Lord necessarily the words of gracious command follow me and the acceptance of that those words and the walking in a path as a result of those words must surely indicate a recognition of the

[8 : 43] Lord being Lord and his being master John himself doubtless could go back to his call when with his brother he left his net and his father Zebedee and followed the Lord Jesus Christ the Lord became his Lord by the power of his voice by the authority of his command and hence John James and others became followers of Jesus Christ and acknowledged it and they felt it because of the authoritative voice by which they were called ye call me master and Lord now let us come to ourselves do we call the

Lord our Lord do we sometimes say master in that well known context master is it I that is a solemn word because eleven of the disciples said Lord is it I and one of the disciples said master is it I and there was a great gulf fixed between the two now the Lord knew what he was saying to these disciples ye call me master and Lord and ye say well for so I am I am your Lord something for us to ponder over this is

I am your Lord and therefore I am your ruler and therefore I have a perfect right to command it is the Lord enthroned in light whose claims are all divine who has an undisputed right to govern me and mine is that one way in which do we discover that Jesus Christ is Lord when by the power of his spirit we came to the spirit of submission to acknowledge that he had an undisputed right to govern me a cult which needed to be broken in a horse that was wild a bullock that was unaccustomed to the yoke he had an undisputed right to govern me and mine this is one way in which the

Lord Jesus is manifested in gracious experience as our Lord but then we may take another view of it for so I am your law my mind just goes to that sweet hymn of John Berridge's how watchful is the loving Lord how sweet his providential word to children that believe your very hairs are numbered all not one by chance or force can fall without your father's leave and I am your Lord can we as it were answer and say my loving

Lord my watchful Lord why should I fear when guarded so or shrink to meet a deadly foe his mouth is held with bit I need not dread his utmost spite nor can he bark nor can he bite unless the Lord permits he call me Lord and Master and you say well for so I am but have we proved it can we say from the depth of our heart it is true in my own experience my soul's experience in life I approve thee to be a loving Lord loving in every aspect of it loving in the severest and most trying circumstances loving when everything seemed against me some of us need a great deal to bring our pride down and therefore sometimes the severity of

[14 : 37] God's judgments are very solemn others realize how much they need to bring their spirit down not to destroy it but to keep it in balance so that it doesn't get out of hand can we see our Lord's working in our lives where such and such things have come and have been such a powerful balance in the day of prosperity there has been the day of adversity running side by side and so we have been delivered from the snare of prosperity lest I should forget God and say who is the Lord but then if it should be the reverse and we should feel overwhelmed with adversity

God is gracious to his people in giving them a measure of spiritual prosperity in order that they may not steal steal the word of God steal the promises of God thus he intervenes and sends the wind of prosperity making over to them the assurance that he will be with them in six troubles and also in seven that they shall not be overcome or overwhelmed in all their troubles the design of God is to bless them we should not forget that point the purpose of God is one the blessing which he would lay upon his people it matters not who may attempt to suggest the opposite we find

Israel looked upon with some fear and maybe some envy by Balak and as he hires Balaam for one purpose to curse the people it is these words are put into his mouth how shall I curse whom God hath not cursed you know the people of God have no need to fear the words of men whatever they may say and if people should curse us in their heart their curses must fall ineffectively because this will be a word which will resound God hath given commandment to bless and he hath blessed and

I cannot reverse it have we proved this word from that point of view ye call me master and lord and ye say well for so I am when people have been set against me yet even though their desire was to curse God's command was they shall be blessed they shall be blessed and there is no doubt about it that the lord himself will prove himself to be lord and master master of the situation master of men master of enemies master of circumstances all to this end to give you a substance to your confession that Jesus Christ is master and lord if we just utter these words master and lord it will be good if in uttering them the substance of true faith is in our heart so that we are able to say lord thou knowest that thou art my lord and thou knowest that thou art my master peace and you will be familiar with the words the lord ensured his presence with them was to be peace peace i peace be unto you may we think upon that you know the Lord has said where two or three are gathered in my name there

I am in the midst and that means peace in our assemblies if the Lord is with us that means peace but is there a troubled heart is there an agitated mind is there an unbelieving Thomas well now that must be dealt with first and so having given this opening salutation the Lord Jesus directs his attention to Thomas and Thomas discovers that he is aware of all his thoughts everything that has been spoken and this is revealed by what the Lord said to Thomas reach it at thy finger and thy hand and be not faithless but believing at that moment if he had never known it before he knew that Jesus Christ was Lord without any reservations he says my Lord and my God so therefore he would not be found under a condemnation that might be suggested by these words ye call me master and Lord but ye are hypocrites now Thomas could not come under that because he knew by the circumstances which had occurred the strange circumstance which prevented his being with the disciples when they met on the previous occasion this was all a trial of events which was to prove to Thomas that Jesus Christ is Lord we may wonder why wasn't Thomas there on the previous occasion it was the Lord's day what hindered him from being there no we're not told in the scripture what but it is clear and this is what we are told that he wasn't with the disciples for worship on that occasion no there was a purpose in that and there is instruction for us in it whether that absence was lawful or unlawful we do not know but it does show us this what advantage the devil may take in regard to our souls even by not being in the house of God when we may be it may be lawful you may have a very good excuse but you see where it brought Thomas it brought him to a place where he said

[24 : 54] I will not believe that which had been spoken that revelation that has been conveyed to him that the Lord came I will not believe he's dead we may have some very severe temptation sometimes in our soul's experience I will not believe but he did believe and when he did believe he had the substance in regard to this first verse of our text he called me master and lord and ye say well for so I am whereby the Thomas and others to whom we have referred could say amen I know it is true now we want to be in the position this morning to say amen to acknowledge that the Lord Jesus is our

Lord and our master then comes a remarkable action by the Lord himself if I then your Lord and master this matter having been settled this matter having been proved if I then your Lord and master have washed your feet this was quite contrary to custom it would have been inappropriate for the servant to wash the master's feet but it was illogical improper unheard of that the master should ever wash the servant's feet it would be proper and according to what was then recognized in Jewish customs for the wife to wash the husband's feet but never the husband to wash the wife's feet and so on what was the Lord doing then had he said

I am your lord and master was it necessary that he should reiterate this point what was going on in the minds of the disciples were they saying what kind of a lord have we got a master that lowers himself to do that which we should be doing to him and it certainly was a great condescension on the part of the Lord Jesus to wash the disciples feet but he did it for a purpose oh he did it for a purpose and this is clearly set before us later on in the scriptures the Lord says the kings of the earth do this but ye shall not do it it shall not be so with you the Christians

Christian people the followers of Jesus Christ are called to walk quite a different pathway from the world the world may sit upon its dignity feed its pride be satisfied with its own glory but not so with the disciples of Jesus Christ now you see this will create a battle because in our hearts there are two sides there's that which is of the flesh and there's that which is of the spirit and I should not be surprised if there have been times when you said I won't allow myself to do that the master sitting with the servants this is unheard of we must keep aloof we must maintain our dignity we must respect our position let that person be brought into this place where

Jesus knelt down and he washed these disciples feet he came and as it were brought himself down to the same level lower than the level so to speak of his disciples setting before them such a situation which shone forth humility in its most wonderful glory oh the humility of Jesus Christ now as we read in the context Peter said Lord thou shall never wash my feet what a respect what a reverence Peter had for his lord and master cannot we find the same feeling entering into our own hearts

[31 : 01] Lord I won't let you do this this is not becoming for you to do this but the Lord Jesus you see he continued to do it he continued to humble himself now what will the pride of their heart say I can't do that what will people think they will think I'm a poor person they may think what they may it is for us to follow what the Lord did and to be of a humble mind in everyday life we may come to those occasions when we make a mistake now how often will the pride of our hearts refuse to admit it but you know this is this is the result of the agitation of the mind saying

I shan't lower myself I've made a mistake but it's in respect to one inferior to me I remember many years ago now I was in a senior position and I knew I gave a certain order which afterwards I discovered was quite wrong and as I thought about it maybe some of you would understand the conflict that was in my mind a situation presented itself that I must go and say that I was wrong to an inferior this is not done but you see a disciple of Jesus Christ sometimes will have to bypass what is not done and whatever my inferior might have thought the power of grace in my mind at that time was this now this is what

Jesus Christ would have done he humbled himself he washed the disciples feet that which he should never have done because of his superiority he was now he now willingly did I do not speak it for my glory when I say I felt it was imperative that I confess my fault to those inferiors what they thought one has to leave but I cleared my conscience before God and in this respect there was a following of what the Lord Jesus did if I then your Lord and Master have washed your feet ye also ought to wash one another's feet now you see there are many people that compose the body of Christ some are rich and some are poor some are clean and others are not always clean some are learned and others are illiterate but shall we pick and choose what a motly crowd so to speak we have in these disciples he did not make a distinction between

Peter and James and John and Matthew the publican who evidently was of greater ability than the others naturally speaking calling was higher but he made no difference God is no respecter of persons and hence we come to remember the Lord's teaching in the parable of the Good Samaritan in answer to a very simple question and who is my neighbour who is my neighbour we are very proud if our neighbours are nice fashionable people aren't we and we can go along with them but who is my neighbour and then the Lord Jesus brings before our eyes the case of the man that fell among thieves and he was half dead and he was stripped he was in a shocking state shall we acknowledge our neighbour the Lord

Jesus gives us the example here he was virtually doing what he expressed here in a simple form washing the disciples feet he went where this person was and he poured in oil and wine he spoke comforting words he set this poor man on his own beast he took him to an inn he made sure that he was comfortable he made provision for the present and he also assured of provision for the future now we may not be capable of all that but the Lord Jesus is capable of it and if we have been the man that fell among thieves shall we not be greatly humbled and amazed that he should have made present provision and given assurance for future provision and whatsoever is more

[37 : 28] I will pay when I come again if I then your Lord and master have washed your feet ye also ought to wash one another's feet for I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you we have examples in the world but here is an example which may serve for the whole world for one thing surely the world would be a better place if this was observed but particularly for the disciples of Jesus Christ so much is done and said discussed which may be sound in creed and may appear to be sound in experience but God weighs the actions

God weighs the actions Hannah discovered this so many years before it was a painful path that she had to pursue or rather shall I say that God let her in but what a blessing came out of it my heart rejoices in the Lord mine horn is exalted in the Lord my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies because I rejoice in thy salvation there is none holy as the Lord for there is none beside thee neither is there any rock like our God ye call me master and Lord how this trial this bitter trial this trial of persecution only fell out to emphasize how God was the Lord was her

Lord with this result talk no more so exceeding and proudly let not arrogance come out of your mouth for the Lord is a God of knowledge and by him actions are weighed not your knowledge of doctrine right as that is not the marvel of your experience choice as that may be but God weighs the actions the bows of the mighty men are broken and they that stumbled are girded with strength God's actions bringing about a gracious experience for surely this is a gracious experience in full description the bows of the mighty men are broken and they that stumbled are girded with strength they that were full have hired out themselves for bread and they that were hungry ceased so that the barren hath born seven and she that hath many children is waxed feeble the

Lord maketh poor and maketh rich he bringeth low and lifteth up but the words before us I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you but we look beyond this little scene homely scene domestic scene of the Lord washing the disciples feet to a scene which is so much deeper so much more wonderful so much more glorious it is described to us in the epistle to the Philippians where we read let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God but made himself of no reputation that is a master being willing to become a servant do you marvel are you dissolved to tears when you observe the Lord

Jesus Christ whispering these words into your soul I am among you as one that serveth oh but you're my lord and master I am among you as one that serveth and the whole of the Lord's life can be observed to be dedicated along that line but made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men and being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself and became obedient unto death even the death of the cross so we see a much deeper meaning than that which we have touched upon hitherto in this example which the Lord Jesus said you see here was some little incident that they would readily understand the point would be forced home to them their master and lord was in their very presence being as a servant it was but to emphasize what they would later understand more fully and more deeply the work which his father gave him to do the work of a servant of saving his church of delivering that church out of the hands of the enemy but in order to do so it was necessary that he should be made of a woman made unto the

[44 : 09] Lord that he might satisfy all the demands of the Lord and furthermore for this purpose was the son of God manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil one aspect this is of your lord and master washing the disciples feet refreshing them with his with a conveyed knowledge of his sufferings and death weariness may often become what may often be a lot as we go along life's journey what will revive your spirit the gospel of Jesus Christ the example that is set before us not just in a good life not just doing good to one another and so on but in the revelation of the great love wherewith he loved us with the consequence that he gave himself for us gave his life for his sheep wherefore

God also hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father now this brings us back to our opening words he called me master and Lord is it in this relationship and within this context to the glory of God the Father shall we give thanks unto God the Father when we say my Lord and my God and yet the Father's servant the Father's first elect if there be any virtue if there be any praise and these things think on them amen amen

Willie