

The Gospel of Luke

Pride and Prestige at the Last Supper

Luke 22:21-27

1. **Pretender: The Betrayer is Present** (vs.21-22)
Judas had already agreed to betray Jesus at an opportune time for a sum of money (Lk. 22:3-6; Mt. 26:14-16). Jesus' Passover preparations made it impossible for Judas to betray Jesus during the meal (Lk. 23:8-13) and so He would have to wait until later that evening (Lk. 22:47).
2. **Pride: The Discussion Among the Disciples** (vs.23-24)
 - A. The Identity of the Worst of Them (v.23)
The thought of being both a trusted companion and close associate with Jesus as well as being the one who betrayed Him was a shocking thought. The disciples earnestly questioned Jesus and one another about the possible identity of the traitor (Mt. 26:21-23; Jn. 13:26; cf. Ps. 41:9; 55:12-21).
 - B. The Identity of the Greatest of Them (v.24)
However, Luke's narration of the evening quickly turns from a discussion concerned with identifying a traitor to identifying who is foremost among them. This was a perennial topic of dispute among the apostles (Lk. 9:46; Mt. 20:20-24; Mk. 10:36-41), and this occasion was perhaps than the others because of Jesus' explicit statements of immanent betrayal (cf. vs.21-23).
3. **Prestige: Manifestations of Greatness** (vs.25-27)
Contrary to the way in which power and greatness were displayed in the cultures to which they were familiar, Jesus explains that true greatness in the eyes of God is manifested very differently.
 - A. Self-Centered Exaltation Rejected (v.25)
The example of kings and rulers of the gentiles is taken as a given by the disciples. Forceful subjugation or reminding others to whom they owe their position, wealth, or power were commonplace. The Antonia fortress, located adjacent to the temple, was named by Herod after his benefactor, Mark Antony.
 - B. Selfless Humble Service Validated (v.26)
With each occasion of the disciples' arguments over their own greatness, Jesus expressly taught them that greatness was demonstrated in times of service, not by a title of status (Lk. 9:8; Mt. 20:26, 27).
 - C. Jesus as the Perfect Example of Greatness (v.27)
That very night, Jesus had washed the feet of His disciples as a demonstration of this very principle (Jn. 13:5-20; cf. Phil 2:3ff).