

“Reclining on Jesus’ chest”: John 13:21-26

Second Sunday of Advent – “Preparing” – December 5, 2021

Tom Mount – Holy Trinity Chico

Scripture reading – John 13:21-26 NASB20

²¹ When Jesus had said these things, He became troubled in spirit, and testified and said, “Truly, truly I say to you that one of you will betray Me.” ²² The disciples began looking at one another, at a loss to know of which one He was speaking. ²³ Lying back on Jesus’ chest was one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. ²⁴ So Simon Peter nodded to this disciple and said to him, “Tell us who it is of whom He is speaking.” ²⁵ He then simply leaned back on Jesus’ chest and said to Him, “Lord, who is it?” ²⁶ Jesus then answered, “That man is the one for whom I shall dip the piece of bread and give it to him.” So when He had dipped the piece of bread, He took and gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot.”

Introduction

- Historical context: Jewish Passover tradition and the Roman triclinium. Wording: v.23 *kolpos*-chest.

What did this posture reveal about their friendship?

The posture presumed John really understood Jesus’ fondness for him

John 13:23: “...the disciple whom Jesus loved...” (cf. 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20).

The posture mirrored Jesus' own posture toward his Father

John 1:18: "No one has seen God at any time; God the one and only, who is in the bosom (*kolpos* - chest) of the Father, He has made him known."

How can you maintain this posture toward the Father and the Son?

1. Trust God's heart for you (Rom 8:31-39; John 16:26; 17:23; Ps 147:10-11).
2. Be honest with all your thoughts and feelings at all times (e.g., Ps 3:1; 4:1; 6:1-7; 13:1).
3. Ask him continually for a deeper closeness with him (Ex 33:18; Ps 27:4; 42:1-2; 63:1-8).

Take away

This week, keep this image in mind: you are lying against Jesus' chest, listening, enjoying his presence, talking with him about everything going on in your life, big and small. As you do that, you will be walking in his Spirit, praying continually, preparing yourself for whatever he calls you to do, fulfilling this, the second theme of the Advent season.