

John 13:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him.

Analysis

No man at the table knew for what intent he spake this (οὐδεὶς ἔγνω... πρὸς τί εἶπεν, oudeis egnō... pros ti eipen)—the verb *ginōskō* (to know, perceive) emphasizes their complete incomprehension. Even John, the beloved disciple who had just leaned on Jesus's breast (v.23), misses the significance. This reveals how Jesus shielded Judas's reputation to the very end, allowing him privacy for potential repentance.

The disciples' ignorance also demonstrates that Judas's external discipleship appeared genuine. His hypocrisy was so practiced that those who lived with him for three years detected nothing. This warns against mere external religion without heart transformation.

Historical Context

In a culture of honor and shame, Jesus's discretion protected Judas from public exposure and potential mob violence from the other disciples. The intimate Upper Room setting—likely fewer than 20 people reclining closely—makes their incomprehension more striking. Jesus's private communication with Judas preserved his dignity even in betrayal.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. Why did Jesus protect Judas's reputation rather than expose him publicly to the other disciples?
2. What does the disciples' inability to discern Judas's true character teach about the danger of religious hypocrisy?
3. How can you cultivate genuine heart-level discipleship rather than mere external conformity?

Interlinear Text

τοῦτο	δὲ	οὐδεὶς	ἔγνω	τῶι	ἀνακειμένων	πρὸς	τί
this	Now	no man	knew	G3588	at the table	for what	intent
G5124	G1161	G3762	G1097		G345	G4314	G5101

εἶπεν αὐτῷ.

he spoke unto him

G2036 G846

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